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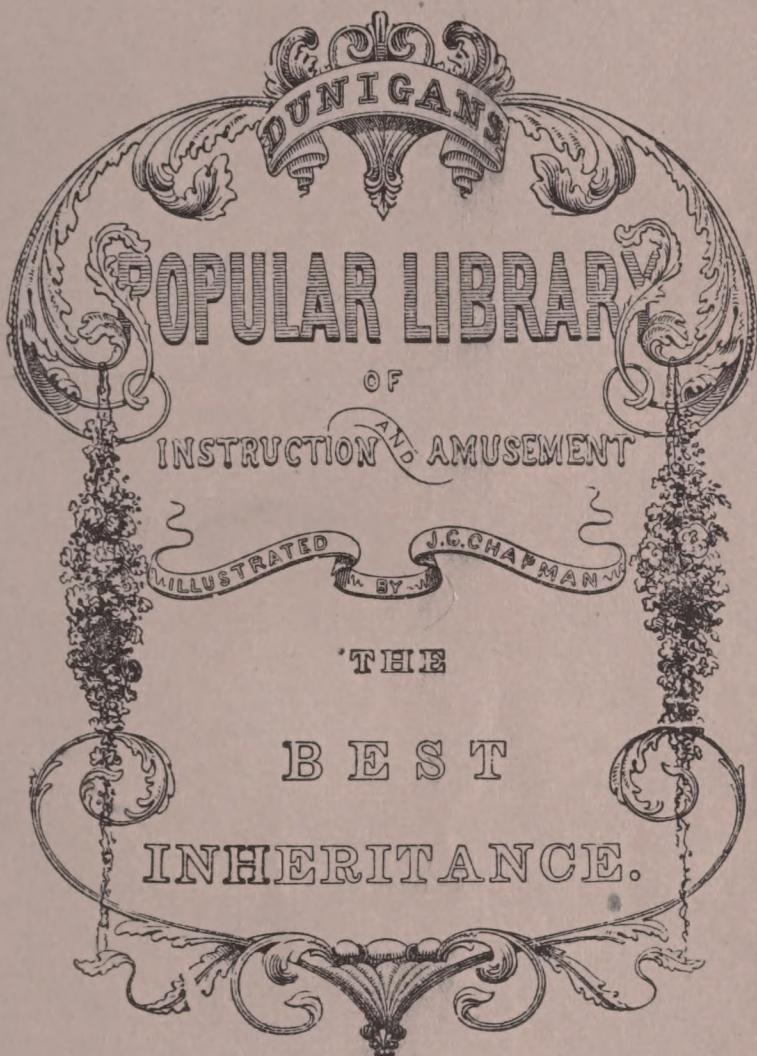
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"Vollmar and the old man; who, considering his age, was still very powerful, drew it entirely out."—
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NEW YORK:
P. J. KENEDY,
EXCELSIOR CATHOLIC PUBLISHING HOUSE,
5 BARCLAY STREET.

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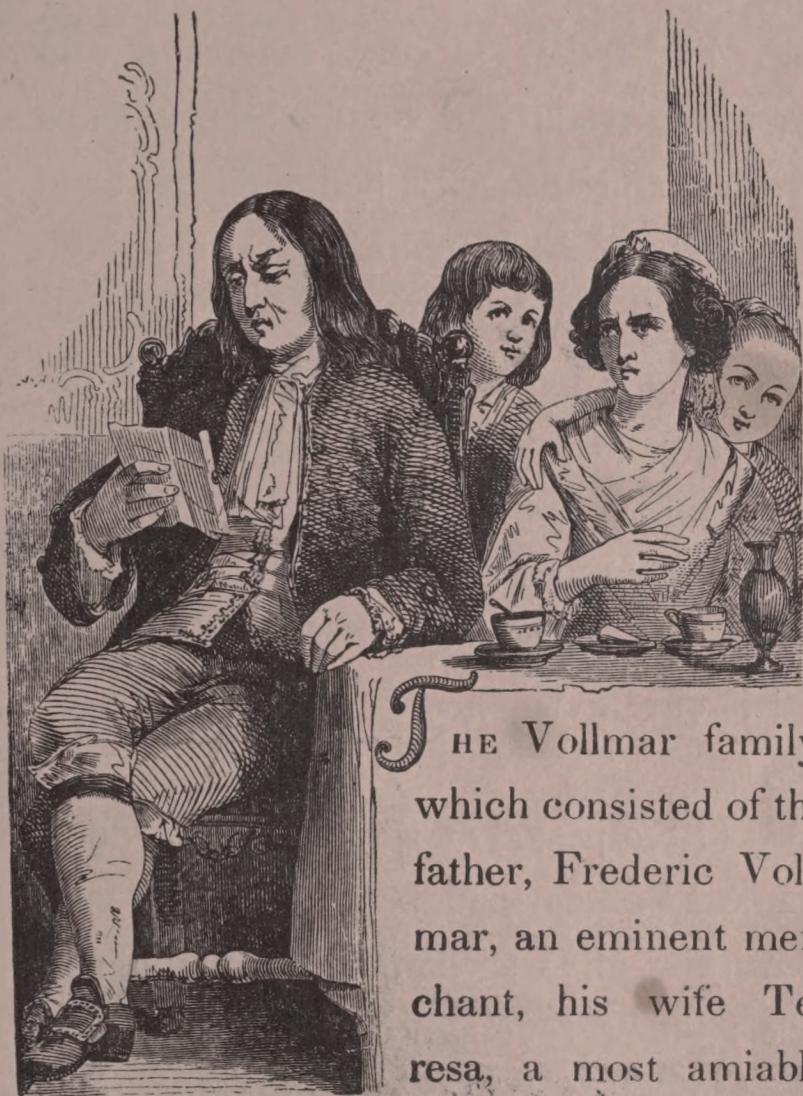
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THE Vollmar family, which consisted of the father, Frederic Vollmar, an eminent merchant, his wife Teresa, a most amiable lady, and two promising children, Maximilian and Fanny, was one of the richest, and, what is far better, one of the worthiest in the great commercial city where they resided. Mr Vollmar had inherited

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from his father a very extensive and flourishing trade, and by his own talents, industry, and integrity had enlarged and improved it, and acquired a very considerable fortune. But he was not unduly elevated by his prosperity, and would often say to his wife: "Dear Teresa, every thing that we possess is the gift of God; but our children are our richest treasures, and to bring them up well is our first and most essential obligation."

Up to the period at which our tale commences, Vollmar had been uniformly successful in all his commercial undertakings; but a reverse came at last. One morning, as he sat at the breakfast-table with his wife and children, the postman brought him a letter which announced that an extensive house with which he had been connected, had most unexpected

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ly failed, and that their liabilities reached to an enormous amount.

This was a great blow for Mr. Vollmar: a large portion of his property was lost; but, as he had not been puffed up by prosperity and wealth, so neither was he cast down by misfortune and failure. “The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away!” said he to his wife; and she unhesitatingly added, “Blessed be the name of the Lord!”

Vollmar took advantage of this melancholy event to impress a lesson on his children.

“This,” said he, “is what I have always said to you: we must never place our trust in the wealth of this world, but only in God, who gives and takes it away, and who can restore it to us when it accords with His all-wise designs. This is truth which you may clearly learn from

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the history of your grandfather and great-grandfather, whose portraits, as you see from their richly gilt frames, are the most cherished ornaments of this apartment. Your great-grandfather, Lucas Vollmar, (who was my grandfather,) was by far the richest man in this city. If all that we have, or ever had, were put together, it would be but a trifle, compared with his enormous property. But he lost all in the Thirty Years' War, of which you have often heard. He was obliged to fly from the enemy. My grandmother did not long survive this affliction; she died a little before her husband was compelled to fly from his home; their only son, my father, was an infant at the time; and my grandfather took him with him in his flight. Soon after this the city was hard pressed by the enemy: numberless balls and shells, which are even to this day

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occasionally found in the walls, were thrown into the town, and many houses were levelled to the ground. A large shell fell into this very house in which we are now living, and damaged it exceedingly, without, however, setting it on fire. The city was sacked and pillaged—numberless families were reduced to the most extreme distress, and many were carried off by famine and pestilence. It was indeed a time of affliction and sorrow.

“ Meanwhile my grandfather was residing in a foreign country, where he was sorely pressed by want; for though he had provided himself with a large sum of money for his journey, he had the misfortune of being plundered by the enemy upon the road. The friends on whose assistance he had calculated, received him with great coldness: as long as he was rich they had treated him with deference,

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but now that he was visited by misfortune, they would hardly recognise him, and he thought himself very fortunate in being able to obtain a trifling subordinate appointment in the commissariat department. He placed his son Hugh, (my father,) as soon as he was old enough, as apprentice in a respectable mercantile house, some miles distant from the place where he resided: but when the boy was scarcely fourteen years old, his father was suddenly carried off by a violent fever which prevailed in the district in consequence of the war. As soon as he suspected that his death was approaching, he dispatched a special messenger to summon his beloved and only son Hugh, with all speed to his death-bed. But he only arrived to behold his dear father a corpse, and to bathe his pallid face with tears. Thus died this worthy man, who but a

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few years before was universally esteemed and possessed immense riches,—in a foreign land—an exile, and almost in poverty and wretchedness His son's grief by his death-bed was indescribable; but from that moment, which took from him every earthly support, he clung yet more confidingly than ever to God.

“ When he had completed his apprenticeship, he remained for some years with his master in the capacity of clerk, and in course of time, rose to the post of book-keeper. At the termination of this destructive war and the re-establishment of peace in the country, he returned to this, our paternal city, poor in earthly substance, but rich in knowledge and virtue. He had acquired a thorough familiarity with business. By the kind exertions of the magistrate he recovered this house which we now inhabit; it contained noth-

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ing but empty boxes; except that to his great delight he found two admirable portraits of his parents uninjured—I have kept them still," said Volmar, turning to the children. " You see them there. Has not your great-grandfather a truly venerable appearance in that antique costume? And your great-grandmother—do not her looks bespeak a pious, modest, gentle dame? Ah, my dear children, they were both true Christian souls. Now look at the portraits of my own parents, your grandfather and grandmother. I got them both painted and framed to match the other portraits. You knew the former, Max, and can recollect his features;—he often carried you in his arms, and fondled you on his knee; and both of you can recollect the good, kind old lady, who was so fond of you and used to give you such fine Christmas-boxes.

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“ Your grandfather was obliged to begin life with nothing—aye, with less than nothing, for he was in debt. He chose as his wife, notwithstanding, a poor but prudent and virtuous girl, whose parents had lost all, like himself, in the war ; feeling convinced that, under her management, his domestic concerns would be more prosperous, than under another who might have a great deal of money, but little prudence or virtue. And he was right. His own skill, industry, activity, and integrity, coupled with her wise economy and skilful domestic arrangements, secured for them no inconsiderable success.

Now hearken, dear children, to the lesson which this history teaches you.

“ As the example of your great-grandfather shows you how easily one may, without any fault, lose an immense property to the very uttermost farthing ; so

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that of your grandfather proves that by piety, industry, and uprightness, one may rise from poverty to independence. My father illustrated by his own example what he often used to say to me. Rich as he became, he always adhered to his simple, unpretending habits of life; never squandering money uselessly, but always laying up something for a day of need. Yet he was far from being a niggard. His workmen and servants were always the very best; and he paid and maintained them well and generously; and he always was a great benefactor to the poor.

"I trust that I too have followed his advice and his example. Had your mother and I indulged in the profuse expenditure which our wealth would have warranted—purchased splendid furniture—given sumptuous entertainments—kept carriages and horses—travelled abroad for pleas-

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ure or a thousand similar things, our position would now be very unhappy ; and the great loss which we have encountered, would probably involve the ruin of our house. And thus we may console ourselves for the loss ; it will cause no greater arrangement in my business : I shall be able to go on as heretofore ; and we are spared the necessity of making any retrenchment in our style of living, which, when it is suddenly enforced, is always painful and humiliating."

By such discourses as these, Mr. Vollmar had the wisdom to draw from this afflicting event the most important advantages for his children—as the bee draws honey even from poisonous flowers.

His misfortunes, however, were not yet at an end. The fall of the great firm, by which he had been so great a sufferer, drew after it other mercantile houses also,

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by which he incurred still further losses. He felt most sincerely for them all. "They are far more unfortunate than I," said he. "How gladly would I assist them all, were it in my power!" As it was, he did all that he could, and where it was possible yet to redeem their credit, he supported them so generously by his money and his name, that they were enabled still to carry on their business.

The times, however, became still more unfavorable for business, and a great stagnation of trade ensued. Wares, which a little before had been most profitable, now ceased to be in demand, and lay upon his hands.

"Well, well," said Vollmar, "the times are changed, it is true, but we are not alone in this; the husbandman, too, when he has tilled his farm in the sweat of his brow, looks forward to a rich harvest."

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but bad weather or hail-storms often dash his hopes to the ground. Why should the merchant be more fortunate? God has wise ends in every thing that befalls us; and even what afflicts us most, often turns out to be for our good. We must rely on this, and say with courage and confidence: ‘His holy will be done!’”

But a new misfortune fell severely upon him. A ship with a very valuable cargo, for which he already had a great many orders, was lost at sea. He was deeply grieved at the news, but he thanked God that at least the crew were saved. “One human life,” said he, “is worth more than the whole ship’s cargo.”

His position, meanwhile, became every day more critical. He examined his books and balanced the state of his affairs. “Alas!” said he, as he laid down his pen, “can it then be that I must give up my

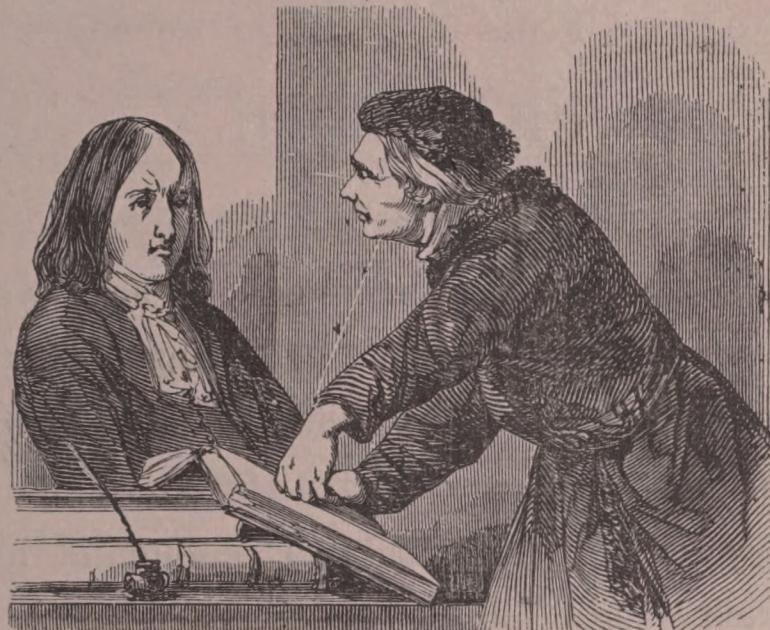
THE BEST INHERITANCE.

business, and that I shall have hardly anything left of all my property? Well, it is some comfort, at least, that I can pay my creditors honestly, and that nobody will lose by me. My conscience in the sight of God, and my honor in the eyes of men, are untouched; nor is there any man breathing who has reason to speak ill of my name. And, after all, if my creditors do not press me—if they give me time to arrange my affairs, I hope I shall yet extricate myself from my present difficulties."

But there was a rich banker who threatened to disappoint him in this expectation. Vollmar had given bills to this banker for near ten thousand dollars, which were due within eight days. He begged him to allow him a little longer time; but the banker unfeelingly replied: "Not an hour—you must pay, or I shall protest your

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bills, and have you arrested ;—unless I have my money in good current coin here upon the table by this day week—that



is,” said he, looking at his day-book, “on Thursday, the 20th of June, inst., you shall undoubtedly go to prison.”

Poor Mr. Vollmar returned home with a heavy heart. “Alas,” said he, “it is only for my wife and children I care. Oh! how will they be afflicted if their father be cast into prison! Avert, O mer-

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ciful God, in thy mercy, avert this sorrow from them!"

CHAPTER II.

THE BLIND OLD MAN.

VOLLMAR now determined to ask two of his friends, whom he had himself often assisted in pecuniary difficulties, to lend him the necessary sum. He knew that they could both together command as much ready money as would meet his necessity; and he had no doubt that they would credit his assurance, that they ran no risk of losing a single dollar by the advance. But the first of them told him, with a thousand expressions of politeness, that he regretted extremely it was not in his power to serve him, being himself obliged to make at that moment a large

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payment ; the other shrugged his shoulders, and gave him very significantly to understand that he did not fully trust his assurances, and that he had his doubts of his solvency. This ingratitude, on the part of his supposed friends, pained the poor merchant to the heart. "But, at all events," thought he, "I still have one Friend who surely will not desert me."

He passed out of the city gate—"Yes, my dear Lord," cried he, looking up to heaven, as soon as he was in the open country, "Thou, at least, canst not—Thou will not forsake me. In Thee have I ever trusted ; to Thee I commend my wife and my children Thou wilt be a father to us all!"

He walked on to his villa, endeavoring to banish his melancholy anticipations, and relieve his oppressed heart. He entered the garden ; the sun was shining

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With unusual beauty, the birds were singing their evening song, the flowers bloom'd in all their varied hues; still his heart became all at once indescribably heavy. "Ah!" said he, "it will grieve me sorely to part with my sweet garden, on which I have expended so much, and in which I have spent so many happy hours. But, alas, it is inevitable; and perhaps I shall even be driven with my wife and children to leave house and home, and seek a refuge in God knows what corner of the earth!"

He became very melancholy, and was on the point of kneeling down to pray for help and comfort to God, who, in all his ways, is ever wisdom and mercy itself; but, as he perceived people in the next garden, he went into his summer-house, that he might pray in secret. There, in the little room, he fell upon his knees, and

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poured out his heart before his God, without restraint. "In Thee, O Lord," cried he, "I place my trust—I throw myself unreservedly into thy paternal arms; do with me according to thy holy will!" And in this posture, with clasped hands and upturned eyes, he remained a long time motionless on his knees.

On a sudden he heard outside of the window, a clear sweet voice, saying in a loud and expressive tone, "Courage! God will yet help us!" He arose and went to the window, which commanded a view of the field. A narrow footpath, leading towards the town, ran between the fields and the garden, and along this path he saw advancing a venerable old man, with snow-white hair, led by a beautiful curly headed, rosy-cheeked boy. The garb of both was poor, but extremely clean. As they came directly opposite, the little boy

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said, in the same clear and distinct voice :
“ Here is a nice green seat under this tree ; you are very tired, dear grandfather ; rest here a while, and don’t be cast down. It is not far to the town now —I can see the gate.”



They both sat down under the tree, which was upon a little mound, a few paces from the summer-house. The evening sun shone full upon the venerable face

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of the old man and the fair brow of the little boy ; and the expression of tender anxiety for the old man which beamed from the boy's eyes, was to Mr. Vollmar a most interesting spectacle. But he was himself concealed from them by the green Venetian blind which hung before the window.

"Ah, it was a great venture," said the old man, after a pause, "for me, blind and old as I am, to undertake this long journey ; and I am not without anxiety now. They told me, to be sure, that this famous doctor had cured a great many poor blind people for nothing, and I hope he will be equally charitable to me. But can my blindness really be cured ? Our little purse is almost emptied by the journey : perhaps the treatment will take a long time, and then what shall we have to live on ? It is now fifty years since I worked

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in this town as a journeyman mason. I don't know a soul in it now, nor will there be any one to know me. The people who lived here then were very industrious and thriving, and therefore very independent and very charitable; but their bones have long been laid in the earth. Heaven grant we may find among the present generation some charitable people, who may make room for us in some little corner of their house, and give us some trifle to eat, and not charge us too much for it."

"Don't be afraid, dearest grandfather," said the boy. "Even though our money should run out, I will beg hard of the rich people in the town to take pity on you. They will not have the heart to let you die of hunger or distress. And besides, you should not forget that—God is over all. You are always reminding me of this. He will watch over us, and throw

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us in the way of some charitable Christian."

"I hope so," said his grandfather, "but still I am cast down, and cannot shake off my gloom."

"But only think, dearest grandfather," said the boy, "I have led you by the hand all the way here. Do you imagine I could have the heart to run away now, and leave you here to shift for yourself? Well, do not think worse of our merciful God than you would of a poor simple boy. It would be a sin to do so."

"You are right, dear Aloysius," replied the old man; "God, who has led us so far, will not forsake us now. He will continue to watch over the poor blind man!"

Mr. Vollmar, who had distinctly heard this conversation, was deeply moved. "O my God!" exclaimed he, "I am not alone in misery. To be blind—to be de-

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baried the sight of the beautiful blue sky
the green trees, the flowers, the sun, the
faces of men—this, ah ! this indeed is hard
—far harder than what has befallen me !
I still have both my eyes, sound and
whole ; and though my whole fortune
were gone, what would it be compared
with the loss of my eyes ? How well this
poor old man and his sweet little grandson
know how to cheer their wretchedness by
confidence in God ! And is it right for
me to be less trustful in Him ?”

Meanwhile his wife came into the garden, with her two children. She was more distressed by her husband’s affliction than by the prospect of the loss of their property. He had told her, on leaving the house, that he had one or two calls to make, and would meet her at the villa and she had followed him thither to keep him from brooding alone over his misfor-

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tunes, and as far as possible to cheer and console him. She brought the children to one of the currant-bushes, and gave them leave to eat some, telling them afterwards to fill the little basket, which Fanny carried on her arm. She then followed her husband to the summer-house, not finding him in the garden.

"How do you feel, dearest Frederic," she asked—"what are you doing?"

"I have received great comfort," he replied, in a low tone, motioning to her also to speak low. "God has sent a little boy here to teach me confidence in His providence. But hush, look here!"

He led her to the window, and told her, in a low voice, what he had just heard from the old man and the sweet little boy. They were discussing, at that moment, how they could find a lodging in the vast city, and how they should, with

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their slender purse, be able to get through without being obliged to beg. Their conversation deeply affected the kind-hearted lady.

“Dearest Frederic,” said she to her husband, “what would you think, if we were to take this old man and the dear little boy into our house?”

“What?” said Vollmar, “is it now? in our present circumstances? The whole city would cry out against us. We are ourselves, perhaps, in danger of being soon as poor as these poor people!”

“Ah!” said his wife, “you are too desponding. I still have hopes. And even though we were to lose the greater part of our property, we should still, please God, have enough to be able to give a meal to a blind old man and a poor child. What these poor people would cost us will make no great change in our present

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circumstances. We can give them a room in our large house without its costing us a penny, and their support will make no notable difference in our house, where, at times, above twenty dine every day. Let us take them in. Christ our Lord says: ‘Be ye merciful, and ye shall find mercy!’”

“ Well,” said Vollmar, “ though you be of the weaker sex, you have more courage than I. Be it so; we will give them food and lodging, and call in the oculist, who, by-the-by, is our family physician, to the old man.”

The old man here stood up; the boy took him by the hand, and led him on. They went very slowly. The lady went to her children and said: “Come with me, Max!” Both the children followed her to the garden gate. “See,” said she, “there on the footpath is walking a blind old

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man, with a little boy leading him. Tell them to come to us here in the garden; that we wish to speak with them."

The children ran as fast as they could, and gave the message.

When the old man and the boy, accompanied by the children, came near the gate, Mr. Vollmar and his generous wife were standing there to meet them. They manifested the liveliest sympathy with the old man in his blindness; praised the boy who had taken so much care of him, and offered to provide for them both in their house till the cure of his eyes should be quite complete. The old man felt as though he had fallen from the heavens "Good God!" said he, clasping his hands, "trust in Thee is never in vain!"

"Now you see, dear grandfather," said the boy, "that God never forsakes his own!"

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Vollmar and his wife brought the old man and his grandson into the garden seated them on a bench, and inquired affectionately into his circumstances. His name was Christian Selb, he was by trade a mason, and lived with his son at a very distant village. He had been blind seven years, he said, and was most affectionately maintained by his son and daughter-in-law, of whom he spoke most tenderly, as well as of their children, of whom Aloysius was the oldest. Mr. and Mrs. Vollmar brought them to their house and gave them a very neat little apartment; and Mrs. Vollmar herself carried them their supper. On the following day Mr. Vollmar brought the oculist, who, the moment he examined the old man's eyes, pronounced it a case of common cataract, and expressed a hope of being able to cure him. "We must first, however,"

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said he, "give the poor old man three days' rest after the fatigues of his journey, and then, with God's help, we shall set about the operation."

"Now, God be praised!" cried Aloysius. "I will pray fervently to Him for these three days, to guide the surgeon's judgment and hand in the operation."

"Do so, my dear little fellow," said the surgeon, "and our operation cannot fail."

On the morning of the third day, the surgeon came to perform the operation. The old man was placed upon a seat; the surgeon produced his instruments; little Aloysius knelt at a little distance,—his uplifted hands trembled with anxiety, and, with beating heart and stifled breath, he riveted his eyes upon the surgeon. Farther off stood Vollmar, his wife, and his two children. No one else was admitted, though every one in the house

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would have gladly been present. Every thing was so still that you would have heard a pin fall. With a steady hand, the surgeon made the necessary incisions, and in a little while the old man cried out: "Ah! I see! Dearest grandson, I see your face! Oh, join me in thanking God and the good surgeon!"

The little boy jumped up, kissed the doctor's hand repeatedly, and skipped about for joy.

"Oh, God be praised!" cried he. "Oh how delighted will my father and mother, and my brothers and sisters all be, when I shall bring home my grandfather with his sight once more!"

The old man sat with clasped hands, and prayed in silence. Mr. Vollmar and his wife joined heartily in his silent thanksgiving; but the two children exulted as loudly as the delighted grandson, and cor-

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dially congratulated the old man and the surgeon on the result of the operation.

"For the present," said the surgeon, "we must cover up his eyes; as yet they would not be able to bear the light." But he promised to come every day and see them, till the cure should be completed, directing the patient, meanwhile, to be kept perfectly quiet, and to be very temperate in eating and drinking. When he took his leave, Mr. and Mrs. Vollmar accompanied him; while the joyous exclamations of the three children, "He sees he sees!" rang through the house, and the whole family was full of jubilee and exultation.

Meanwhile, the old man knelt down, with his eyes bandaged, to give thanks to God; he prayed for a long time, and his grandson knelt beside him in silent prayer.

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CHAPTER III.

THE ECCE HOMO.

“**E**VERY thing is going on favorably,” said the surgeon, when he had examined the old man’s eyes on the third day afterwards; “this room, however, is too lightsome to permit his eyes to familiarize themselves gradually with the light. But I remember, my dear Mr. Vollmar, that you have below-stairs, on the ground-floor, a very neat little apartment, which opens into your garden: it is painted green, and the garden outside is covered with green turf, and shaded with dense foliage, and even the garden walls are covered with green leaves. Will you permit this good old man, in whom you are so interested, to spend a few hours there each day?”

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"With a thousand welcomes," said Vollmar, "he may sit as long as he chooses there each day. It is a very cool, pleasant little spot, especially in the heat of the day, and the light which comes through the glass doors is uncommon mild and agreeable."

"Glass doors!" cried Aloysius, who was a simple country boy, "that is very strange. I should like to see them!"

"May I not show them to him?" asked little Max. "He will require to know the way, in order to be able to lead his grandfather there."

"Well then go down together," said Mr. Vollmar; and the two boys ran off hand in hand, and Fanny followed them at a more quiet pace. The only ornament of this pretty little room was a valuable painting, representing our Lord with the crown of thorns on his head, the

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purple garment on his shoulders, and the reed in his hand. It was a half-length, but as large as life, and magnificently framed

As soon as Aloysius saw it, he clasped his hands and cried out, "Oh! how beautiful, how exquisite! That is an *Ecce Homo!* We have one in our house; but I never, in all my life, saw our Lord painted so beautifully as here. It looks as if He were alive! Oh! with what patience and confidence He raises his eyes to Heaven! It brings the tears to my eyes And the crown of thorns—you would take them for real thorns—and the drops of blood upon the crown of thorns, upon the brow, the cheeks, and the shoulders, where it is not hid by the purple garment, are so natural that you fancy they are trinkling down every moment! Oh, how much did He suffer for love of us!"

"My mother often tells us," said Fan.

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ny “that this picture is as if Christ said to us :—

‘Born for thy sake, I lived and died
O Christian soul, for thee!—
Ah, be it e'er thy holiest pride,
To live and die for me.’

And the other day, when she was herself very melancholy, I heard her say, as she looked at the picture: ‘Alas! if Christ suffered so much for us, and bore that crown of thorns on his head for our sake, how could we expect to go to heaven without trials, and to walk as if on a path strewn only with roses.’ ”

“It is a noble picture,” said Max. “An Englishman, who was paying a bill to my father last year, saw it and offered a hundred pounds for it, though it was then hanging in the office covered with smoke and dust. At dinner, when my father spoke to my mother and the old book.

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keeper about it, the book-keeper said, ‘I would give the picture if I got such an offer—it is so much unemployed capital.’ But my mother cried out, ‘Oh! no, it is no such thing; such a picture as that, so beautiful and impressive, is no unprofitable capital. Man liveth not by bread alone, nor by the gold which he possesses.’ ‘Many a time have I too,’ said my father, ‘contemplated the picture with admiration; but it was this English gentleman who first pointed out to me its value as a work of art.’ He afterwards had it cleaned and restored by the most skilful painter in the city, and placed it in that handsome gilt frame: it was so much improved that we could hardly recognise it, and every one in the house was enchanted with it.”

Little Max and Fanny then brought Aloysius to the garden. He was delighted and amused exceedingly by the foun-

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tain, never having seen one before, and he could not cease admiring it.

Meanwhile, Mr. Vollmar walked into the little apartment with the good old man, whom he had himself conducted down; and, according to the surgeon's directions, he removed the bandage from his eyes. The first object upon which his eyes rested was the beautiful *Ecce Homo*. "Oh!" cried he, in the utmost astonishment, "what do I see? I know this picture well; I saw it but once in my life, and that more than forty years ago, and by candlelight; but I have never forgotten it since. Yes, that pale bleeding face—that agonizing heavenward look—those thorns which lacerate the brow and temples, have often haunted me in my dreams. The hour in which I saw it was one of the most eventful in my life—the very thought of it still fills me with agitation."

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"Your words amaze me," replied Vollmar, "I do not comprehend you. Tell me how it was that you saw this picture, and that it made such an impression upon you."

"Let me first ask you," said the old man, "whether the picture is long in this house, and whether you are long in possession of the house, or have lately purchased either it or the picture?"

"Both the picture and the house," said Vollmar, "have come down to me from my grandfather. But why all these questions, my dear old friend?"

"I must ask you another still, before I can explain," he replied. "Pray tell me whether your grandfather died in this house, or fled during the war, without being ever able to return home?"

"My grandfather," said Vollmar, "died far away in a foreign land. But I am

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amazed at the object of all these questions."

"Was your grandmother still alive, and was she present at his death?" asked the old man again.

"No," replied Vollmar, "she died long before. But I must still say your questions surprise me."

"Perhaps your father was present at your grandfather's death-bed?" continued the old man. "Did he never tell you that his father communicated an important secret to him before his death?"

"Your extraordinary inquiries puzzle me more and more," replied the merchant. "My grandfather died of a violent fever, which deprived him of his senses. My father, who was then a boy, was summoned to his death-bed, but he found him a corpse."

"One other question," said the old man

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"Did your grandfather leave a great fortune behind him? Was your father a rich man?"

"My father," said Vollmar, "when he returned to his native city, was, I may say, a poor man; it was with difficulty he succeeded in reopening and re-establishing his business, which had been ruined by the war."

The old man looked very earnestly at Mr. Vollmar. "You are extremely like your grandfather," said he; "it frequently happens that the grandson is more so than the son. At the time of which I speak, he was about your present age, and when I look at you I can almost fancy it is the same individual I see before me. Listen, I pray you, to my history; I may, perhaps, be able to render you a service.

"A short time before the city was besieged and pillaged, I was engaged here ~~as~~

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a working mason ; one night an old clerk came to my master, and requested him to go with him, in order to assist his master in concealing his most valuable effects. My master, however, was sick and could not go, but proposed me as his substitute, offering to guarantee my honesty and trustworthiness with his own life and property. Accordingly, I accompanied the old servant. It was a dark and terrific night, the rain and storm were really awful. Without being told either the name of the house or of the proprietor, I was led through a large hall into an office. Your grandfather, for I cannot doubt that it was he, seemed somewhat surprised that my master had sent him so young a man. He was silent for a while, but when the clerk reported the master's words, the merchant ordered him to light two tapers in addition to the lamp which

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stood upon the desk, and to place them on the table, above which this picture hung, and required me to swear never to divulge to mortal man a word of the mystery he was going to confide to me, except, possibly, to the rightful heir. He dictated the oath for me, and I, with uplifted right hand, repeated the words after him ; standing at the time in front of the picture.

" He then conducted me from the office through a series of vaulted and well-stored warerooms ; the clerk attended us all the while. By a strait stone stairway, which led under-ground, we reached a narrow little passage, from which we came to caverns excavated in the rock, in which a number of large vessels lay. At last, the clerk opened another door, which was provided with strong locks, and we entered a little vault formed of large square

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stones; it was here the rich merchant had kept his choicest wines, but now the casks were removed on one side, and two chests, one large and the other small, with a quantity of silver-plate, lay along the wall.

"The merchant pointed to a square stone in the wall, no larger than the rest, and about a foot from the ground. 'This stone,' said he, 'conceals the entrance to a secret recess, in which I mean to conceal my effects. The stone is only about a span thick, and cannot be removed without great trouble, and it is for the purpose of taking it out and replacing it that your services are required.' The necessary iron tools were in readiness, and a bucket with mortar stood at hand: for the prudent gentleman had, the day before, employed two other masons to repair the wall of the court-yard, and had got his trusty old

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clerk to bring away, privately, as much of the mortar as was necessary for his ultimate purpose. I succeeded in taking out the stone without injury; it required no little skill and care, but I succeeded; and on creeping in through the opening, I found a tolerably roomy vault within. The merchant and his clerk, with my assistance from the inside, shoved in the large chest, which was of oak, and the smaller one, which was of iron—they were very heavy. We next stowed away the plate, and I then replaced the stone in the wall, and closed the joints so well with mortar, that they could not be distinguished from those between the rest of the stones. The gentleman then pressed a gold piece into my hand, put his finger upon his lips, and said: ‘Remember your oath!’ I thanked him joyfully, and again solemnly assured him that the secret with

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which I had been trusted should never pass my lips.

"Soon after, the enemy arrived before the city; all building was discontinued, and all the foreign mechanics were dismissed. I set out on my journeying, travelled in every direction, and at last married the daughter of a master-builder, about fifty miles from this city; I never came here again, and it is now many years since I even thought of the buried treasures. At that time, during the war, there were many similar transactions at which my assistance was required; and it was only this moment that the sight of this beautiful picture of our Divine Redeemer recalled the recollection of this old story of the buried treasure.

"Dearest, kindest Mr. Vollmar," concluded the old man, "I think it is a plain intervention of Providence that brought

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“Here ; God moved your heart charitably to take into your house a poor old blind stranger ; He opened my eyes that I might see this beautiful picture, and reveal to you your hidden inheritance—He will reward your benevolence. The same exquisite picture, which has hitherto, as often as you looked upon it, filled your heart and those of your dear family, with admiration and delight, is now to be the means, under Heaven, of bringing a temporal blessing also to your house.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE TREASURE.

MR. VOLLMAR had listened with great attention to the narrative of the venerable old man. “ You may be right, my good

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old friend," said he; "it has always been conjectured that my grandfather must have concealed a considerable treasure somewhere or other. He had prudently foreseen that the war would completely ruin trade, and had, therefore, gradually narrowed the extended range of his commerce; and, apparently, either transferred elsewhere his immense capital, or buried it in the earth, together with all his valuable effects. But where, neither I nor my father could find the smallest trace; however, the description which you give of the strait stone stairway, of the narrow passage and the subterraneous vault, tallies exactly, and I am quite convinced that my grandfather did conceal his best treasures behind that stone. But I much doubt whether they will be found there now. The enemy who pillaged our city and ransacked all the vaults, cellars, and even

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tombs, displaying extraordinary sagacity in discovering concealed treasure, must, in all probability, have discovered this also. It is possible, too, that my grandfather may have trusted his secret to some supposed friend, who may have played him false and privately appropriated this treasure; still the thing is worth trying, and we shall examine it as soon as possible."

"We can do so on the spot," replied the mason. "Lead me there at once. I would know at a glance whether the stone has been moved or not, and thus could tell what is the fate of the treasure."

"No," said Vollmar, "not yet, it might injure your eyes."

"Oh!" replied the mason, "the twilight of these dim cellars will not dazzle my eyes in the least, and therefore cannot do them any harm."

"Well, then," said Vollmar, "come

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with me; I should have desired, at any rate, to bring you, as an experienced builder, to see one of these vaults which has sustained a great shake, to which my people have several times anxiously called my attention. We shall assign this as the reason of our visit, and keep the other private for some time yet."

They went arm and arm. When the old man came to the innermost vault he said, "Yes, this is it, I still recollect this little round loophole, with strong iron grating. We had to cover it then with a thick hair packing-cloth, lest the light should pass out and betray us at our nocturnal enterprise. The well-known stone is directly opposite this little window."

Mr. Vollmar pushed somewhat asunder two of the casks which lay against the wall. The old man squeezed himself with some difficulty between them.

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“Victory!” he cried. “The stone is untouched—I know my work still—the treasure is there yet. Praise and thanks be to God!”

“Yes, thanks be to God!” cried Vollmar; “he knows that my heart is not fixed on gold or wealth; but in my present position this discovery is a real and well-timed favor of God. I will have these casks taken out to-day, and crow-bars and other necessary tools brought in. My servant Paul will help us; he is still a young man, as were you at that time, but he is as true and as upright as yourself. Come back with me now; to-night we shall set about our work, which, however, as I said, must still remain a secret.”

When it was dark, Vollmar and his wife, the old man, and the servant Paul, repaired to the vault. Vollmar had had the little round window covered, during

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the evening, with a carpet: the casks were shoved aside, and the tools were ready. The old mason wanted to set to the work, but Vollmar said to him: "You must spare yourself as yet; I will try what I can do at your craft, though I have never learnt it, and I shall only ask your advice." The active Paul relieved his master occasionally at the work; at length the stone was loose, and Paul and his master removed it. Paul crept in with a lighted taper, and saw first the collection of plate, which was all green and mouldy. He handed out one piece after another—a silver epergne, massive silver lamps, goblets, cups, plates, saltcellars, spoons, and forks. Mrs. Vollmar took them from him with trembling hands, and wondered at their strange old-fashioned form. Paul next shoved out the little iron chest, which Mr. Vollmar took charge of; and at last he set to the

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great oak chest, which was so heavy that it was only with the aid of a crowbar he could push it to the mouth of the passage. Vollmar and the old man, who, considering his age, was still very powerful, drew it entirely out, Paul assisting them from behind with all his might.

As the key was not to be had Vollmar was obliged to employ the crowbar to open the chests. In the upper part of the oaken one they found some finer pieces of plate, of more exquisite workmanship, washed with gold. Beneath were a number of little leathern bags, marked with ciphers, and, judging by their weight, full of gold. Mr. Vollmar opened one of them: it contained nothing but gold pieces of a very old coinage, but as beautiful and bright as if they had just been coined. Far below were heavy bags full of dollars, which, however, had almost all turned

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green. The little iron chest contained, in cases of various forms and sizes, all sorts of costly jewels, but especially ladies' trinkets of gold, richly set with diamonds. Mrs. Vollmar was almost more delighted with these than with the gold and silver coins. At the bottom of the little chest were found two leaden cases, smeared with water-proof cement, to secure them from damp. "They are very light," said Mr. Vollmar, and probably contain nothing but family papers, which, however, will doubtless be of great value to me."

He then ordered Paul to carry the heavy money-bags up to his blue tapestryed cabinet, in order to lighten the chests. As soon as Paul, who was very active in his own way, had done this, Mr. Vollmar said to him: "Now you must help me to carry up the large chest; and **you, Teresa,**" said he to his wife, "will

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be able, and I doubt not ready, to carry up, with the assistance of our old friend, the little casket with the jewels, which you prize so highly. We shall leave the rest of the plate here for the present, taking care to lock the vault cautiously."

He locked it, and they all went up to the blue cabinet. The old mason and Paul went to bed in high spirits, for they both took a lively interest in Mr. Vollmar's fortune, and he had besides promised them a considerable reward; but the merchant and his wife sat up almost till daybreak.

Mrs. Vollmar examined the trinkets. She cleaned the diamonds with chamois leather. "See, Frederic," said she, "with what brilliancy and fire these diamonds still sparkle, after so long a time! I am delighted with them; but the massive old-fashioned setting, stirs up in me a melan-

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choly feeling of the transitoriness of life. Your grandmother must have worn these jewels in times long gone by ! But what have we here, wrapped in oiled paper,



and sealed up with wax ? Oh, see," cried she, " this little portrait, set in crystal and gold, is the likeness of your grandmother, Barbara Vollmar. It was painted while she was yet a bride—so the inscription on the back testifies. At that time she was

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but eighteen years old. How lovely, fresh, and blooming she looks!—not so serious as in the full-length portrait in the parlor, where she appears as a venerable matron. But who is this? It is your grandfather, Lucas Vollmar. At that time he was almost a mere youth. How fiery and animated his eyes!—how blooming his cheeks! and how rich the locks which adorn his head! These parted locks," said she, smiling, "are surely prettier than the old French peruke which he wears in the great picture!"

"Is it not well," replied Vollmar, "that our spirit is more enduring than the flesh which embodies it, and which withers away like the flower of the field? Our soul is more lasting than gold or diamonds; at the end of the world they will melt away in the fire; but God created our soul immortal. To Him be honor,

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praise, glory, and gratitude, forever and ever!"

CHAPTER V.

IMPORTANT FAMILY PAPERS.

WHILE Mrs. Vollmar was engaged with the jewels, her husband was turning over the time-stained documents which he found in the cases. They contained many family papers, which interested him extremely, and showed him that his grandfather had been in correspondence with the most distinguished men of those times.

"This document," said he, at last, to his wife, as he unrolled a paper, "this document is the most important of them all: it contains an account of the treasure, and is entirely in the hand of my grandfather, who has inscribed it 'my last will

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and testament.' Let us hear what he writes." He read the document exactly as it stood in the original:—

"In the name of the most Holy Trinity:

"I, Lucas Vollmar, citizen and merchant, and member of the grand council, do hereby declare as follows:

"Whereas, in these precarious times, our good city is not secure for a single day from falling into the hands of the enemy, and being pillaged, or even burned and razed to the ground, I have deemed it advisable to build up and conceal in a fire-and-shell-proof vault, under my house, all my most valuable property, both money and effects.

"And whereas, in consequence of this great peril, even to my life, it is no longer safe for me to remain here, the enemy being especially embittered against me, and having, as I have well ascertained, made

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no secret that they have vowed my death, because I thought it my duty to God and father-land to support the good cause, by providing from my own resources, men, ammunition, and equipments: And whereas, even within the city a hostile party has grown up, who threaten to gain the upper hand, and will no longer tolerate my presence here; I feel myself necessitated to turn my back on our beloved native city, and to betake myself to a sorrowful flight.

“And whereas, moreover, it is most probable that I shall not survive this fearful war, which has already lasted fifteen years, and that my only son, Hugh, the partner of my flight, who is still a tender child, shall not be able to return to his native city till the end of the war and the re-establishment of peace, which may, perhaps, be many years hence: And whereas, this deserted house may mean-

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while fall into strange hands ; I therefore deposite along with this inheritance in gold and effects, which I bequeath to my son and place in security for him in this vault, the present signed and sealed instrument, in order that upon his return he may be enabled, without let or hinderance, to claim and take possession of this, his rightful inheritance.

“ And reflecting further, that it is possible some fatality may befall me during this, my distressing flight, and that God in His unfathomable and inscrutable designs may call me out of life during the minority of my beloved son, Hugh ; that I cannot prudently intrust to an almost infant child the secret of this hidden treasure—that I have no other relative, and do not know any one to whom I can commit it—that I cannot hope to find in a foreign land such a person—(since, in the present state of

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things, one who is a friend to-day may be an enemy to-morrow;) and that my old servant, Nicholas, who is alone cognizant of the secret, and whom I leave in charge of my house, is already eighty years old, and may soon die—and that, lastly, it may easily happen that in those troubled times, my dear child, notwithstanding the inheritance reserved, but unknown to him, may perish in poverty and wretchedness in a distant land, and that the treasure may escape notice till long years hence, and then fall into strange hands:—in such case, I hereby explicitly declare it as my sacred and solemn testament, that the whole treasure be divided into three equal parts, one of which shall go to the finder, one to the hospital, and the third to the church and schools of my native city. And I charge it on the future finder, by his conscience, his soul, and his hopes of

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happiness, that he suppress not, or conceal, or in any way deal fraudulently with, this my property, but make true discovery thereof to the magistrates, and that he remember that in the world to come, we shall have to render an account for every unjustly acquired farthing, and that, therefore, to conceal this treasure would be to purchase therewith remorse in this world, and dreadful punishments in the next. And let the worshipful magistrates, burgomasters, and councillors of our city value and appraise all according to the discovery made unto them, and carry my testament into effect, according to the distribution aforesaid.

“ Yet as I hope in God that He will continue to my aforesaid son and heir, and to his descendants, my grandchildren and great-grandchildren, the rich blessing which He has vouchsafed to myself, therefore I

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add for their behoof this paternal admonition.

“My dear son Hugh, and you my beloved grandchildren, let not this bequest of mine betray you into indolence, luxury, extravagance, or idle pomp: be not like the rich glutton in the gospel, else the blessing will turn to a curse in your regard. Be ever industrious, frugal, temperate, charitable, and benevolent to the poor. Forget not that God hath but appointed the rich to be his stewards, and administrators of the wealth intrusted to them, and that we must render an account before his judgment-seat of the manner in which we have employed and disposed of it for the good of our fellow-men, the charitable support of the poor, and the advancement of the common weal. Thus will the temporal blessing prove a **source also** of eternal happiness.

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“My son, hearken to this word of thy
oving father, and impress it also on the
children with whom God may hereafter
bless thee ; I leave thee my blessing ; and
you, too, my future grandchildren, whose
faces I shall never see—blessings on ye
all ! In momentary peril of death do I
write this scroll. Be it to you as my
dying testament. And now I commit you
and all my posterity to the protection of
God. May He guard you from all evil,
from sin and crime ; may He deign to
preserve you in virtue, and graciously to
guide you that ye live lives not unworthy
of your forefathers, God-fearing, virtuous,
and honorable Christians. When you,
my beloved descendants, shall read this
scroll, which I have written not without
copious tears, my bones and those of your
poor grandmother will have been long re-
posing in the churchyard. Reflect that

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you, too, must die, and live so that we may all meet in the hope of a joyous resurrection in that heaven to which I too, look forward, after this miserable life! Amen!

“LUCAS VOLLMAR.”

*Written on the night of
January 15th, 1633.*

While Mr. Vollmar was reading this document, his wife sat with folded hands, listening as piously as though she had been at church, and the tears trickled fast down her cheeks. “Your grandfather, Lucas,” said she, “was a truly pious, good, honest man. His address to his son Hugh, to you, dearest Frederic, and to myself and our children, makes a deep impression on my heart. May God receive and reward him, in heaven above, for his Christian sentiments, and his love and forethought for us and our children!”

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"God grant it," said her husband; "and let us follow faithfully the advice of our good, venerable grandsire. God has wisely ordained that we should be the parties to find the treasure. He has kept it faithfully for us till this hour, when we most stand in need of assistance. It was fortunate and providential that my grandfather was not able to tell my father where it was that he buried his treasure during the war. It is true, that thus my father was severely tried during his youth; he suffered much as a poor orphan in the midst of strangers: he had to sit early and late at his desk; and when he returned hither at the end of the war, it cost him incredible trouble to re-establish and resume his business; but he was thus induced to inure me also to industry and labor, and to make me master of all the knowledge which is necessary for a mer

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chant. Had I come sooner into the possession of all this money and property, it would perhaps have turned my head : I might have fixed my heart upon these perishable riches and given myself up to indolence and dissipation. Experience teaches that great riches seldom reach a third generation ; it is a proverb that the ‘grandfather gathers ; the son scatters ; and the grandson starves ;’ and it is too often the case. We must therefore adhere to our wonted simple, laborious, and frugal habits of life, and accustom our children to the same ; but above all we must train them, as heretofore, in the fear of God. Riches without the fear of God is a dangerous gift, and has been the ruin, both in body and soul, of many an unhappy victim. A good education is the best fortune we can leave to our children. **Wealth is a very uncertain property : but**

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true piety and solid virtue are beyond all price ; they have a stamp which is not only valuable in this world, but retains its value for all eternity.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE PARTING FEAST.

MR. VOLLMAR slept but a few hours, and then repaired to the chamber of the old mason, whose honesty and prudence had quite won upon his affections. “My good old friend,” said he, “I am greatly indebted to you; to you I owe my grandfather’s inheritance.”

“Oh, no, no,” replied the old man. “It is I who am indebted to you. You have been the means of restoring my eyesight to me. You took me, an aged, blind

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stranger, into your house ; you called in the oculist to me, and promised him a rich reward if he should restore my sight ; you have taken the most tender care of myself and my grandchild. For the rest of my life, which I now feel is on the decline, I shall never be able to thank you sufficiently. But let us both return thanks to God ! It was He—I can never repeat it too often—it was He that moved your heart to take me into your house ; it was He that opened my eyes to see the beautiful picture and to discover the hidden treasure for you.”

“ You are right,” said Mr. Vollmar, “ we both have reason to thank God ; but that does not release me from my obligation to you. Take up your abode, good old father, henceforth in my house ; I, my wife, and my children will regard you as our grandsire, and will, in the words of the

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popular phrase, strew your path with flowers."

"O, no, no," said the old man, "I honor and love you and yours from my soul, but still I pine to return to my poor little hut; my son and daughter-in-law are counting the days till they see me; and, oh! how my heart yearns to see my younger grandchildren, whose faces I have never yet beheld. They all, children, and children's children, will exult to see me once again, now that I am restored to sight. Let me then go in peace; poor, worn out, old man that I am, I am no longer worth any thing in this world. These rooms are all too large for me--too long, too high, and too wide—I am not rightly at home in them, and I shall be far better in my own quiet little room; there I shall devote the rest of my life to God, frequently visiting our little village church, and meditating

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on death and eternity, till I shall lie down to rest under the green turf in our little village graveyard."

"Well, then," said Vollmar, "if you can not be happy otherwise, return in God's name to your home; but I will settle an annuity upon you, which shall secure you from want. And as I perceive from your discourse that your son has not yet been able to discharge all the debts which he contracted when he commenced to keep house, and has but a small field and a little patch of meadow, I will myself pay his debts and purchase other fields and larger meadow-land for him; and in every necessity, both you and your son may always reckon on my assistance as far as money can aid you. For the present, you must remain with us till your eyes are fully restored, and then I shall send you home in my own carriage."

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On the day before his taking leave, Vollmar told the old man that his wife had prepared a little farewell feast for that evening. "You, your grandson, myself, and my children," said he, "will go out to my villa for a while, till it shall be time for supper."

They went; it was a beautiful summer evening; not a cloud was upon the sky, and there was a gentle refreshing breeze. "Merciful Providence," said the old man, when he entered the garden and looked around him, "a few weeks ago I stood here blind and in utter darkness, and could not see aught of all the splendor which heaven has created! Oh! how fair is the evening sky: how glorious that declining sun, which turns all around to gold! How charming are these roses and all these other flowers, nameless for me. Alas! it is a true saying, 'a blind man is a poor man;'

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those who see are rich, though they know not how to prize their riches."

Little Max shut his eyes. "Yes, indeed," said he, "it is a sad thing to be blind, and to grope about this way in the dark. I would not give my eyes for all the gold, and silver, and jewels, which my father found in the cellar."

"You are right," said his father. "But look out at all these green leaves, these roses, all the flowers of the garden, the ears of corn in the fields, and the blades of grass in the meadows. All these flowers, leaves, ears, and blades, every thing that we see, is painted within the little pupil of your eye. How amazingly—how infinitely minute, fine, and delicate these pictures must be!"

"I never dreamed of that," said Max, in astonishment. "Stop, Aloysius, let me look into your eye: oh! I declare I see

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my own picture in it! O, how very small, fine, and delicate it is! The beautiful little miniature of our great-grandfather is not half so delicate—it is nothing to this."

Max had a little book in his hand; he opened it and held it up.

"I can see the book too," cried he, "but I can't read the letters; the pages look to be all white."

"And yet," said his father, "every letter, and every point is painted in the eye. Whenever we look at a printed or written page, that moment the writing is painted in our eye!"

"O, how very small the writing must be," said Max: "no man could write so small as that—I am astonished."

"Well may we be astonished," said his father. "What wisdom and power—what godlike art is displayed in those pictures and letters which, without our conscious-

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ness--without colors or pencil, pen or ink, —are thus accurately and clearly impressed upon our eyes! Every rose, every lily is truly depicted—every letter is faithfully transcribed! Equally wondrous, yea, still more wondrous is it, that those objects which are painted so very minute in our eyes, appear to us, notwithstanding, so large. How minute is the picture of the spire of our church yonder—the smallest needle is not so sharp and fine! and yet we see the spire before us almost of immense size, with its antique decorations—its arabesque ornaments, and light window-like open-work. If we only consider aright the human eye—this miracle of the Divine Omnipotence—we should fall upon our knees, and, in the dust, adore the Almighty Creator!"

He looked reverently to heaven, and
the old man and the three children were

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filled with an adoring consciousness of the omnipotence and wisdom of God.

When the sun had set, Mr. Vollmar and his little party returned to the city. His wife, meanwhile, had prepared the supper-table in the little apartment in which the *Ecce Homo* hung, and had laid it out with all the newly-found antique plate, which had been cleaned by a silversmith. Four wax-lights were burning in silver candlesticks, and the silver plate upon the snow-white coverlet, shone and sparkled as bright and beautiful as if it were just new from the shop.

“ Does not this silver look very different now ? ” said Max to his little sister, laughing heartily at her. “ When you first saw it, you remember you said you would not for the world drink out of those green cups.”

His father called for silence ; and Fan-

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ny, whose turn it was that evening, said grace, and they sat down ; the old man, in whose honor the feast was given, between Mr. and Mrs. Vollmar, and Aloysius between Max and Fanny. During supper hardly a word was spoken except about the occurrences which had taken place since the evening when Mr. Vollmar first saw the old man and his grandson out of the summer-house window.

“ It was a lucky chance for me,” said the old man, “ or rather a merciful arrangement of God, that Mr. Vollmar saw me sitting yonder, and heard my conversation with my grandson.

“ Yes, worthiest of men,” he continued, “ I cannot repeat it often enough. It was God who moved your heart to take pity, though yourself in the greatest embarrassment, on my distress, and to receive me so kindly into your house. Ah, as I then

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sat upon that spot, blind and enveloped in darkness, within my soul still deeper darkness dwelt. How my heart trembled for my prospects, old and strange as I was in the great populous city! How happy am I now, that I have got back both my eyes, just as good as new! Blind and poor came I hither: I return seeing and laden with gifts! What joy shall I bring to my home, where my son, his wife and children, will be raised up from care and relieved from distress! Oh, I am unworthy of all the mercy my God has shown me!"

"And to us too," said Mrs. Vollmar, "He has been equally gracious and merciful. We were in imminent danger, not only of losing our town-house and our villa, but of being reduced to a very poor condition, and exposed besides to an infinity of neglect and scorn. God ha

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used you, dear old father, as an angel, to show us where assistance lay ready prepared for us. Ah, even at the very time when our grandfather, by your hands, placed this treasure in that secret vault, our good God had preordained this great mercy to us both! He foresaw this very hour, in which we all sit here rejoicing and praising his goodness. He gave his blessing to the treasure which our grandfather laid up for us!"

"Yes, yes," said Max; "the rich treasure, which our grandfather left for us, is a princely inheritance."

"My dear Max," said his father, "I know an inheritance, which has come down to us from our ancestors, still better than this."

"A greater treasure than all the gold and silver?" said Max, in amazement.

"And than the beautiful sparkling jew

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els," said Fanny, "which are worth more than a heap of gold and silver?"

"All the gold and silver, and all the jewels in the world, are nothing compared with the treasure that I mean," said their father.

"And do you know where this treasure is hidden?" said Max.

"It is not a hidden treasure at all," replied his father. "Every one that is not entirely devoid of feeling can find it."

"Oh! I know now what my father means," said Max. "It is the beautiful *Ecce Homo*. My mother often said there was a special blessing on it. And had my father sold it the time the Englishman offered so much money for it, we should never have found the treasure which was hidden in our house."

"Neither is it the beautiful picture that I mean," returned his father, "though it is

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of great value, both on account of the painter's skill, and, still more, of Him whom it represents. The **BEST INHERITANCE**, which your ancestors inherited from their own and transmitted to us, and which I hope will be your inheritance too, is—**FEAR OF GOD, PIETY, VIRTUE, AND INTEGRITY**. It was of this that the Lord Christ himself said, when Mary, the sister of Martha, sat at his feet, solely intent on hearing and keeping his word, ‘One thing is necessary. Mary hath chosen the better part, which shall not be taken away from her.’

“What could all the treasures in the world avail us, if we were ungodly, frivolous, and uncharitable, without any better object than to enjoy the happiness of this life? These treasures would in that case only make us still more wicked and more unhappy. Little would it avail us merely

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to have in our house that noble picture of our Redeemer, beautifully as it is executed, were we not animated by love and gratitude to the Divine Original—were we not reminded thereby of His love for His heavenly Father, and for us men; could we look with cold hearts upon this crown of thorns—the wounds upon his sacred face—the mark of the buffets—the streaming blood-drops—his trustful look towards heaven; were we not moved thereby to obedience to our heavenly Father, to generous and self-devoting philanthropy, to patience and resignation in sufferings, and to horror of sin, the cause of all his sufferings. Our pious forefathers decorated their apartments with such pictures as these, not alone to admire in them the skill of the artist, (which is even still admired and dearly purchased,) but for the sake of Him whom it

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represents. Christianity was their most precious pearl; their pious Christian spirit displayed itself in their entire life—even in their very domestic arrangements. Look, for example, at these antique goblets, which were found among the family plate. This old silver tankard, chased with gold, which your mother has set before our old friend Christian, is the oldest heirloom of our family. It was presented by his children and grandchildren, on the occasion of his fifty-years jubilee, to my great-grandfather, Albert Vollmar, who had been above fifty years a citizen and merchant here. Look here, on this exquisitely-carved gold medallion is represented the venerable Simeon with the child Jesus. The name of Lucas Vollmar and his wife, and the date of the month and year, are beautifully engraved round about, for, in those days, fear of God and respect

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for parents went hand in hand. My goblet and your mother's were marriage presents to my grandfather and grandmother. Upon mine are represented the first married pair in paradise ; on your mother's is the marriage of Cana, and round about are engraved the names, the day and the year for the good people of those times were wont to unite the sacred history with their own, and thus endeavored to sanctify their domestic life, and to convert their family festivities into true Christian festivals.

"These three little cups, my children, out of which you are drinking, are Christmas presents. Your little cup, Fanny, was presented to my grandmother by her godfather ; yours, Max, was given to my grandfather's parents for him on the day of his baptism, as is engraved in full on them both : and the beautiful little cup that Aloysius has before him was a Christ-

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was present to my grandfather's sister. Her name, Mary Vollmar, and the day of her birth, encircled by roses and lilies, are engraved upon the cup. She grew up a maiden of extraordinary beauty, and no less eminent piety and virtue. But she died a bride, in the very flower of her beauty; and her afflicted parents had the day of her death engraved upon the other side of the cup, and underneath it are the words of Holy Writ: 'All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof is as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth and the flower falleth away; the world passeth with its pleasure, but he who doth the will of God liveth forever!' Oh, how affecting is it to think thus of our forefathers! Shall we not honor their memory, and walk in their footsteps, never departing from their simple habit of life? In god

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liness and virtue alone is happiness to be found.

"But it is time," concluded Vollmar, "to drink the health of our dear guest, who, as he once concealed these goblets, has now again restored them to the light of day, with their fine old inscriptions which awaken such precious recollections in our souls. May he long himself enjoy the light of day, and be happy in the society of his children and grandchildren!"

The venerable old man was deeply affected: the tears stood in his gray eyelashes, and rolled down his time-worn cheeks.

"Long live my best benefactors, Mr. and Mrs. Vollmar!" he said; "God will reward them for what they have done for me, and will give a plentiful blessing to

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their children, both for time and for eternity.”

He drank, and paused for a while. “I acknowledge it as a great blessing from God,” said he, “to have been restored to the use of my eyesight; but I hold it a far greater benefit that he has introduced me to such a truly Christian family, where I hear so much that is good, and where my faith is animated anew. The light of the soul is more precious than the corporal light which we enjoy in common with the beasts. A living faith in God is the light of the soul. Let us therefore prize, even more than the light of our eyes, faith in God, Christ, virtue, and eternal life; let us follow its guidance, and guard it more carefully than our sight itself. Let us lay up for ourselves a treasure in heaven which is beyond all the

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treasures of earth. Let GODLINESS, VIRTUE, and INTEGRITY, be the BEST INHERITANCE which we shall leave behind for our children."

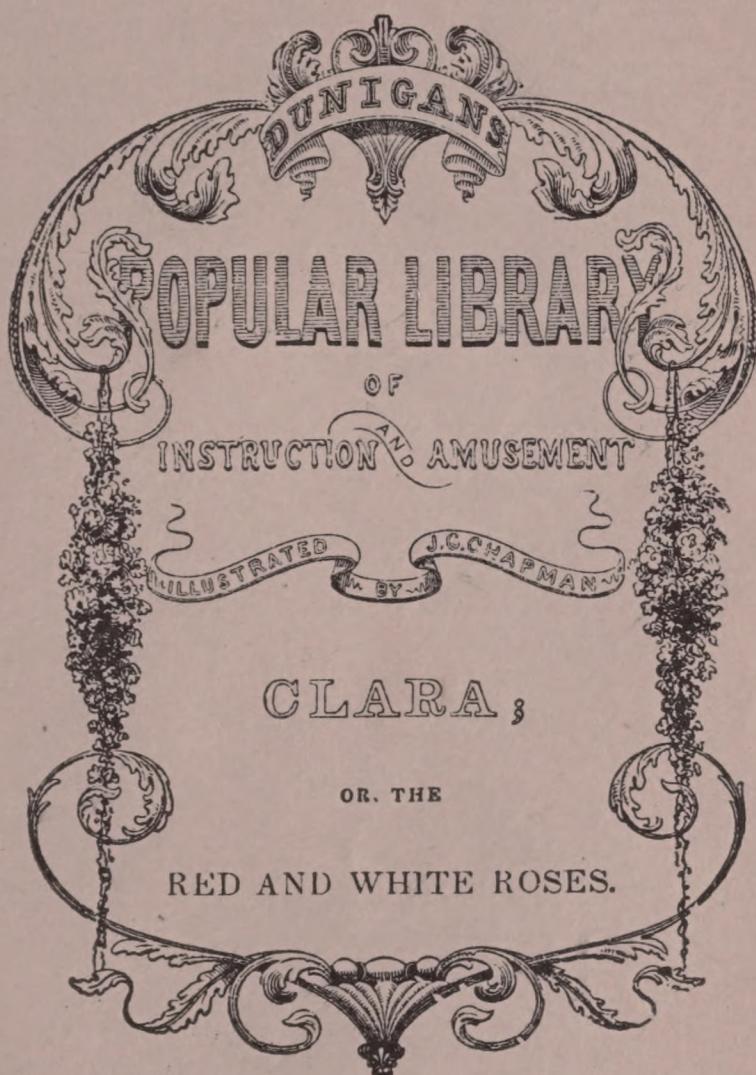
On the following morning, after morning prayer and breakfast were concluded, the carriage was prepared and brought to the door. It was well-packed ; for Mrs. Vollmar had stored it with all sorts of presents for the old man and his children and grandchildren. He took leave of them with tears in his eyes, and Aloysius kissed their hands and bade the children farewell ; and they all accompanied the deeply-affected old man and the sobbing boy to the carriage.

" May God repay you for all!" said he once more, " and may He ever abide with you. May we all live in faith in Christ, and may we die like Simeon, prepared to

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say, ‘Now dost Thou dismiss thy servant
O Lord, according to Thy word, in peace
because my eyes have seen Thy salvation
which Thou hast prepared before the face
of all people ! ’ ”







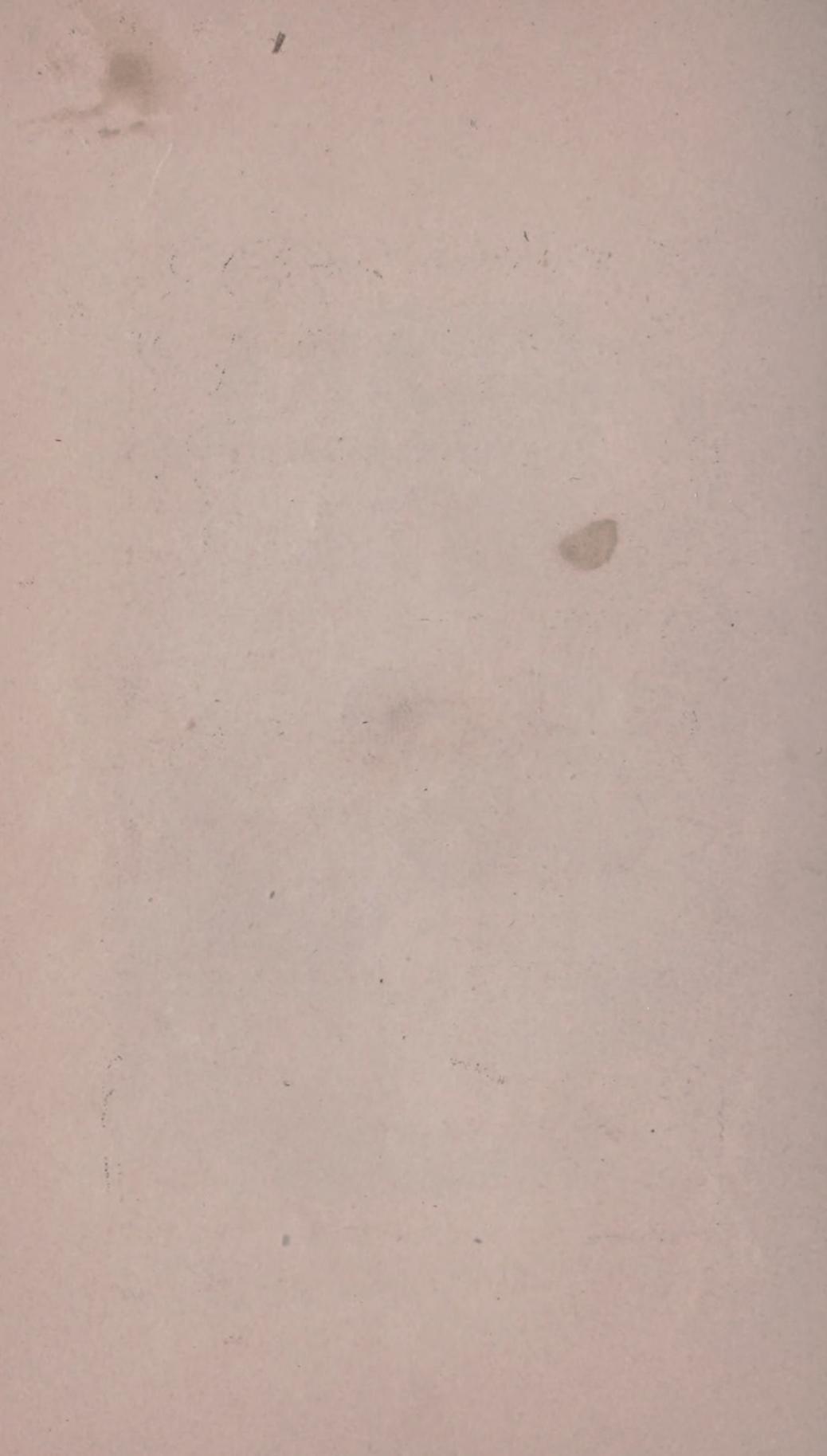
"Clara rose early and spent a full hour before
the looking-glass."—Page 58.

CLARA

RED AND WHITE ROSES

FROM THE
TESSAN OF CHRISTIE







FROM her tenderest infancy, Clara was a lovely and promising child. Her mother was a pious woman, and her father, who was one of the king's huntsmen, had a high character for intelligence and integrity. The hunting lodge, where they lived, lay in a

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lonely wooded valley, from which, at the distance of about two miles, the spire of the village-church was seen rising between two pine-clad hills. The father could not spend much of his time at home, as the extent of the forest intrusted to his care kept him busily engaged during the greater part of the day. The great charm of the mother's lonely hours, was the society of her beloved child; whose infant smiles, and innocent lisplings, spoke plainly enough for a mother's heart. The first thoughts and feelings which little Clara expressed were, to the fond soul of her parent, like the blushing streaks of the morning that usher in a brilliant day.

From her very childhood, Clara was passionately fond of flowers. When she was about four years old, her greatest delight was to ramble over a neighboring

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meadow, and gather the wild flowers, which she brought in handfuls to her mother. The mother therefore resolved to plant flowers in the garden near her house, and in the centre of the garden she planted a rose-tree.

Little Clara could never tire admiring the primrose and the auricula, the tulips and narcissus; but when the rose-tree was in full blow, her joy knew no bounds. "Oh!" she would cry, "what a beautiful red—how sweetly it smells! The rose is certainly the most beautiful of flowers. How kind is our good God, who has given us such beautiful flowers!"

Her father, who was an excellent surveyor, had been ordered to survey a distant forest, where he was detained many weeks. Clara would often say, "Oh, how delighted he will be when he comes home and sees our beautiful flowers!" As the

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poor child had never before seen a rose, she thought he also had never seen one, and was quite impatient for his return.

When, at length, he appeared in the valley, Clara ran to the garden, and plucking a full-blown rose, together with some half-opened clustering buds, ran to meet him, her little face beaming with



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joy as she embraced him, and gave him her beautiful flowers.

The happy father gazed now on little Clara, and then on her flowers. His child appeared to him now, after his absence of a few weeks, more lovely than ever, and in the joy of his heart he exclaimed, "My child, you are like the rose! you are my lovely rose-bud!"

Clara smiled: the innocent child not knowing that she was beautiful, could not understand how she was like the rose. "You are jesting, my dear father," said she, "how can I be like the rose? I must look very strange then. The difference between a rose and a little girl is too plain."

Her mother, who came up at the moment, said, "My dear Clara, give us, by your good behavior, the same pleasure that the bright color and sweet smell of

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the rose gives you; and avoid obstinacy and disobedience, which would be more painful to us than the thorns of the rose were the other day to your own little fingers."

But little Clara never gave her parents any pain. Every day she grew fairer and more lovely, and every day she grew more virtuous and sensible. With all her vivacity she obeyed her parents at their slightest word. Taking pleasure in every thing that was good, sweet-tempered, contented, and affectionate, she was, in a word, a living and lovely picture of innocence.

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CHAPTER II.

THE MOTHER'S GRAVE

CLARA had now passed her tenth year; but towards the end of summer her kind mother visibly began to decline. Symptoms of consumption appeared; and when Autumn came, and the tinted leaves dropped to the earth, and the fields were stripped of their flowers, and the cold blast swept over the stubbles of the naked corn-fields, she took to her bed without any hope of ever recovering. She prepared herself, like a good Christian, for the great passage to eternity, and devoted her few remaining days to her beloved daughter, from whom she was soon to be separated, and whom she endeavored to admonish

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to every virtue, and warn against every vice.

"Oh, dearest Clara!" she used to say, "this world, through which you are to pass, is beset with perils. Many things that appear fair and lovely, are hollow and deceitful, and bring nothing but remorse and affliction. Cling, therefore, close to God, walk always as if in His presence, and let your daily prayer be that He may keep you under His holy protection. Impress the words of Jesus on your heart, 'Blessed are the clean of heart.' 'What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul!' Honor your father, follow his advice: beware, oh! beware of flatterers—the serpent often lurks under flowers. I am soon going from you; but my prayers shall be always yours before the throne of God."

One evening, when the affectionate mo-

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ther was very weak, she gazed once more on her beloved Clara, and said, "Oh, Clara! live always innocent and virtuous, preserve a pure soul, and God will be with you!" She stretched out her wasted arms to bless her child. The pale hue of death overspread her countenance. In a few moments she was dead. Clara, trembling and distracted, seized the cold hand of her mother, and burst into a flood of tears, as she hung over her pale features. The father and daughter attended the coffin to the churchyard of Eschenbach, the neighboring village, and bedewed the grave with their tears.

Every Sunday, after divine service, they visited the grave. The father covered it with green turf, and had a simple black cross set at its head. "But should we not plant our rose-tree here?" said Clara. "Ah!" answered her father, ' that rose-

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tree was planted by herself—we must not stir it,—it is too dear a memorial of her. We must find another rose-tree for this beloved spot.” He did plant another rose-tree at the end of Autumn, with his own hands, in presence of his weeping Clara.

Spring came. All nature revived. A brilliant green clothed the forest, and flowers decked the fields and gardens. But Spring had lost its charms for Clara—her mother was still fresh in her memory—and often did she go, sometimes alone, sometimes with her father, to the grave whose verdant grass was now shaded by the clustering rose-bush.

One day Clara visited the grave with her father, but how great was her surprise on seeing, what she had never seen or heard of before, white roses hanging in rich clusters from the tree! She was so startled, that the ruddy glow fled from her

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cheeks, and she became pale as the roses themselves. “What can this mean?” she exclaimed, “white roses—white rosebuds! I feel as if I saw pale death in every bud! Fresh and beautiful was my mother while she was in health, *like the red rose*, but pale and wan like these when she died! I cannot look at them without trembling—I could not think of plucking one!”

“Why should you tremble, dear child?” said her father,—“a white rose-tree is not so strange as you think. Many gardens are full of them. I planted one of them here, because I thought it more suitable on your mother’s grave than a red rose. I foresaw that this white rose would surprise you, but I hope now to make it instructive to you.”

“Yes, dearest daughter!” he continued, taking her hand, “you are the very image of your mother. The brilliant bloom of

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youth, fresher than the hues of the red rose, now adorns your cheeks. But you, too, like your fair mother, and that perhaps soon, shall be pale in death—pale as those white roses that now weep over her grave. Let them silently speak to you at all times, that salutary lesson inscribed on the pallid features of your dead mother—‘See what a change death makes!’ Count not on the rosy hue of a complexion—the brightest colors soon fade. Flatterers will come and tell you that you are fair; but do not trust them. They would make you vain and foolish. Think, oh think, that you must die! Beauty fades like the rose; innocence alone has lasting worth. Preserve it, for it is a most precious treasure. The body moulders in the grave, but the soul is immortal and destined to unspeakable glory, to infinite happiness. Oh save your soul—spurn the grovelling pleasures

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of earth; and when evil appears pleasant and enticing to you, say to yourself—‘When I shall lie wasted and wan on my death-bed, how much would my last hours be embittered by the sorrowful conviction, that I had departed from virtue?’ Say this to yourself in the hour of temptation, and you will never sin. Take one of these roses, therefore, and wear it on your bosom. If its white hues remind you of the grave, still more should they remind you to live pure and stainless. Death has no terrors for the innocent. Resolve from this moment, so to live that, whether before the bridal altar, or over your grave, the stainless white rose may be a true emblem of your soul. As often as you see a white rose, renew this purpose.”

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CHAPTER III.

THE AUNT.

HITHERTO her mother had been Clara's only instructress, for her father could spare but very little time from his laborious oc



cupation in the forest, and the school of the nearest village was too far away for so young a girl. Her mother had taught her

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to read and write, and her instructive conversation was the best sort of education. But after the mother's death, the father sent Clara to the village-school of Eschenbach, where, with the exception of the excellent Christian instruction of the village pastor, she had in a very short time but little to learn; still there were many female accomplishments and household duties which she had to acquire, and which she could not learn from the old housekeeper at home, who, though very good and pious, knew nothing of a hundred little duties which would be necessary for Clara. The father, therefore, though it cost him many a bitter pang, resolved to intrust her to the care of his sister, who lived in a large town at a considerable distance from Eschenbach. She was the widow of a worthy merchant, named Burke: she had no children; she

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dealt in silks, lace, and muslin, and also had a millinery establishment, directed by herself. She was a woman of an excellent character; and to her the father wrote to know whether she would consent to take charge of Clara.

While he was expecting an answer, a chaise rolled up one evening to the door of the hunting lodge, and Mrs. Burke herself stepped out, and affectionately embraced her brother. As she had not seen Clara for the last three years, she cried out in astonishment—"Oh, how tall and fair you have grown!—will you come to town with me?"

Clara answered with a smile, "Oh, yes; I have been long wishing for a trip to town." She took the proposal thus lightly, because her father had not disclosed his intentions; but now, when she heard that she was to remain in the town for

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One or two years, she knew not what to think. A visit to her affectionate aunt she thought would be delightful, but then how could she think of tearing herself from the society of her beloved father, who would have no one to keep him company!

Her father explained the necessity of the separation, telling her that she had many things to learn in the city. "But," said he, "none of your fashionable accomplishments! Drawing, the piano, and fine and costly embroidery, are fit only for those wealthy ladies who can live on their income, and intrust to others the care of their domestic concerns. A person in your state of life should be instructed in cookery, in needlework, in knitting, washing, and ironing—in a word, in all that is necessary for the economy and careful management of a comfortable citizen's establishment."

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"She can learn all that," said her aunt, "partly in my house and partly in the school."

Clara expressed her cordial assent.

During the three days that Mrs. Burke remained with her, she completely gained Clara's affectionate attachment; but when the morning for her departure arrived, and the coachman's horn rung out the warning, and the vehicle dashed up to the door, and poor Clara was about to be separated from her father, she could not suppress her feelings, but burst into a flood of tears. Throwing herself on her knees she begged his blessing, and he, with tears in his eyes, prayed—"God be with you, my dear child, and guide you in all your ways, and restore you to my arms good and pious, in health and happiness, and instructed in every thing that is necessary for you."

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Mrs. Burke promised to watch over Clara with a mother's care. The father accompanied them both to the coach, and once more bade his weeping daughter farewell. The coach started, and before the sun set Clara was in the town.

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CHAPTER IV.

CLARA IN THE TOWN.

MRS BURKE had a very fine house in the town, and gave her niece an elegantly furnished room, such as Clara had never seen before. During the day she attended school, and her remaining hours were spent in the millinery-room with her dear aunt, who was delighted to find that Clara soon became expert at the needle, and had an excellent taste for millinery. Mrs. Burke was charmed with the childlike simplicity, the rural manners, and correct conduct of her niece. She loved her most tenderly, and Clara returned her love with almost filial affection.

But in her lonely hours, Clara's heart

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was often with her kind father, and even when she was sitting with her aunt, her thoughts often wandered far away to her father's home. This did not escape her aunt. "Clara," said she once, "you are always thinking. Don't you find the town more agreeable than the country? There you had only a small room, with dull brown walls and narrow window; but here you have this large apartment, with its fine windows and beautifully flowered carpet,—and your own room also has good windows, and is elegantly painted."

"True," said Clara with a sigh, "the walls of my own room at home were brown, and the window, with its little round panes, was very narrow; but it was beautiful to see the red beams of the morning sun streaming in through that window, or gilding with their evening

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tints the leaves of the trees. And when I opened the window, I had before me a paradise of blooming meadow and rich green forests ; but here in the town I can never see the sun set—never see a rainbow—I can see nothing but the gray walls and the brown roofs of the neighboring houses.”

“ But,” said her aunt, “ are not our broad streets, with their beautiful rows of houses, more pleasant than the dingy village lane, and the straw-thatched cabins of Eschenbach ?”

“ Your streets are certainly more splendid,” answered Clara, “ but still what can we see here but stone ? In the country I had a carpet of deep green sward, decked with flowers ; but here the hard pavements are disagreeable both to the eyes and feet,—and though our houses in the country are covered with thatch, are

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they not screened by the beautiful flowers and fruits of the shading trees?"

"Oh! you are always boasting of your fields and flowers," said the aunt; "but cannot we here in town get in abundance, and for a very small sum, what country people gather with great toil from their corn-fields, and meadows, and fruit-trees?"

"Perhaps so," says Clara; "and yet since I came to town I have not tasted such rich cream as we had in the country; and the strawberries that I used to gather in the forest were sweeter to smell and taste than any I have seen in your market. The yellow pears and purple plums, too, that you could shake fresh into your lap from the trees in the country, were better than all you could find in the market, if you were to search every stall in it."

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"That may be," answered the aunt; "but at least you hear and see many things in town which you could never find in the country. Were not the illuminations splendid last night? and have you ever heard any thing grander than the music of the joybells and the drums?"

"Certainly," said Clara, "the many thousand lights we saw were pretty enough, but what were they when compared to the moon, and the bright twinkling stars which I often saw rising over the dark forest into the blue sky, when I sat with my dear father and mother on the bench before our door, and when my mother and I joining our voice with the soft deep tones of my father, sang together that fine old song—

"The pale moon has ascended
To her golden throne above!" "

"Oh, sing that song for me, Clara," said

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ner aunt, "you have such a clear, sweet voice, that I am always delighted to hear you."

Clara consented without difficulty and sang:—

"The pale moon has ascended
To her golden throne above ;
And the stars around her, blended
In mazy circles, move ;
But beneath, a dusky shadow
On the lonely forest lies,
And along the silent meadow
The curling vapors rise.

"And night o'er all is stealing,
With noiseless footstep, down—
O'er the shepherd's lonely shieling,
And through the busy town.
And the troubled, from their sorrow,
Find a peaceful respite now,
And the care-imprinted furrow
Fades from the mourner's brow.

"Oh, grant us, Lord, thus ever
To raise our thoughts to Thee ;—
Grant us our hearts to sever
From earthly vanity !—

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**Grant us on earth to serve Thee
With childlike truth and love,
And thus, at last, deserve Thee
In Thy blissful home above!"**

The aunt embraced her niece most affectionately. "Dear Clara," said she, "you sing with great taste and feeling. It was not merely the sweet music—every word came from your heart. May you always persevere in these sentiments."

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CHAPTER V.

THE FATHER'S DEATH.

CLARA was always overjoyed whenever her father came to town, which was regularly twice a year; he also had every reason to be happy, from the many good accounts he heard of her conduct. On one of his visits, Clara was sorely grieved to see him very pale, and very much altered for the worse. "Dear Clara," said he, "you have now been almost two years in town—you have learned enough for a person in your rank of life. I want you at home. As I have an assistant now, I do not spend so much of my time in the forest and I feel very lonely without your company At the close of this year I

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will return and bring you home, and I trust that you will make me happy during the remainder of my days."

Mrs. Burke was very unwilling to let Clara go home, still she would not and could not oppose the father's will. Clara counted the days and hours until his return. But one morning the postman came to the door with a letter. It had a black



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seal, and was directed to Mrs. Burke, in the handwriting of the parish priest of Eschenbach. Clara turned pale, and, trembling with gloomy foreboding, she gave the letter to Mrs. Burke. Mrs. Burke opened and read it. It was the announcement of the sudden death of Clara's father! Poor Clara was overwhelmed with an agony of grief.

Her aunt endeavored to console her. "He is happy," she said. "He was good and virtuous, and he is now in heaven with your mother. We also shall see them there, if we be good and submissive to the will of God." But Clara wept and sobbed incessantly—her eyes were red and swollen with grief—she could neither eat nor sleep.

In the morning her sorrow burst forth afresh—"Alas! I am a poor, poor orphan, without father or mother."

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“Dearest Clara,” said her aunt, “I adopt you as my child—I will have a legal deed drawn up to that effect; my house, my goods, all my property shall be yours.”

“Oh,” said Clara, “that has not cost me one thought. I do not grieve that I have been left almost penniless. It is his loss—the loss of so good, so affectionate a father, that afflicts me so deeply. All the wealth in the world, not even a kingdom, can supply his place to me. I have but one wish—to die, to be once more with my good mother and my dear father in heaven!”

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CHAPTER VI.

JULIA.

SOME days after Clara had received the sad news of the death of her father, she was sent with some millinery to Mrs. Von Hügel, a respectable widow lady, whose husband had been steward of the royal lands, and had died about half a year before. After his death, his widow and her daughter, a virtuous young lady, about Clara's own age, had settled in the town, where they lived on their property. Business had brought Clara to visit them several times already, and she had always been very kindly received. But when she presented herself now in mourning, and bearing on her countenance the impression

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of her sorrows, Mrs. Von Hügel asked her for whom she was in mourning. Clara burst into tears, and told of her father's death, and also of her mother's. The kind widow asked where she was from, and who were her parents? Clara told her. "Merciful God!" exclaimed the widow, "I knew your mother well. When I was in my father's house, she was our servant. Alas! is she dead so soon? She was a good and virtuous soul. I knew your father too, as he often came to our house on business; he was an excellent man. Well, they are both happier in heaven now, than we are. Let us lead such lives here, that we may be worthy to meet them hereafter."

Clara wept bitterly, and Miss Julia sympathized deeply in her grief, for the memory of her dear father rushed fresh on her soul; she, too, began to weep, and even

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the mother could not repress her tears.
All three were greatly affected.

Community of sorrow begot a friendly feeling between them, and when Mrs. Von Hügel and Julia had discovered, from Clara's simple story, her good sense, her noble heart, her piety, her love for her parents, and her esteem for every virtue, they became, even after an interview of half an hour, affectionately attached to her. She was obliged to promise to visit them every Sunday after divine service and she returned home greatly consoled.

According to her promise, Clara went the next Sunday, and was most kindly received. Again was she obliged to revive for her friends the sorrowful but pleasing recollection of her mother. Julia showed her her work and books, played on the piano with great taste, and sang a beautiful song, in which she was accom-

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panied by Clara, whose exquisite voice agreeably surprised her young friend. Again Clara was obliged to renew her promise of the Sunday visit. They both then sang many songs, several of which were sacred; and Julia, from her small but select library, read several books which happily combined entertainment and instruction. Clara listened to them with delight, for she had a soul sensitively alive to whatever was beautiful and good. When she heard a pathetic passage, the tears gushed to her eyes; and when she heard a humorous one, it struck her fancy at once, and called up the merry laugh from the bottom of her heart.

In order to enjoy more of Clara's company, Julia requested her mother to give her some employment in the house; her mother complied, and Clara and Julia thus often spent three or four days together.

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These days flew rapidly, for whether at table or at work, the mother had many agreeable and instructive stories to relate. Clara was overjoyed at having this excellent opportunity of improving herself by the conversation of such a prudent and virtuous woman, and of her amiable daughter. She never left them without finding herself improved and confirmed in her good purposes. Her aunt, also, was charmed on finding that her niece never came home to her without having something agreeable to tell. After some time Clara went every evening, and at all her leisure hours, and always remained with Julia until the lamps were lighted; and she thanked God for giving her so true and worthy a friend. By degrees she was consoled for her father's death, and recovered her usual cheerfulness.

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CHAPTER VII.

YOUNG MR. VON WINNIG.

CLARA had now reached her eighteenth year. Her uncommon beauty, her affability, her artless demeanor, her gentleness, and the gayety which sprung from the innocence of her heart and beamed in her eyes, all attracted universal admiration.

One day, two young ladies came into the shop. They were the daughters of Mr. Von Winnig, a banker, who had lately obtained a title, and was generally reported to be very wealthy. Each of them purchased silk for a dress. They did not consider the price of the most costly silks too high for them; but they told Mrs. Burke to set down her own price in their

RED AND WHITE ROSES.

bill, and that they would settle the matter in their yearly accounts ; at the same time requesting Mrs. Burke to allow Clara to go home with them for some days, to help them to make the dresses. Mrs. Burke very readily assented. Next morning when Clara went, she was most kindly received. They sat around the work-table, but the two Miss Winnigs did very little work. Work to them was a mere pastime. They were entirely taken up with retailing all the latest news of the town, which sometimes was not of a very creditable character. They made the wickedness and folly of men the subject of their merriment, and laughed immoderately at their own stories and remarks.

Their brother came in after some time. He was a fine figure, was dressed in the newest fashion, conversed with sprightliness upon every topic, and had something

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agreeable to say to every one. "What angel is this you have with you?" said he, as he sat down with them. He over-powered Clara with flattery. No one had ever paid her such compliments before, and though all that he said did not please her, his flattery was far from being displeasing. His fine person, his wit and eloquence, threw all his failings into the shade in the eyes of the inexperienced Clara. Young Edward was now her only thought. She imagined that the young gentleman would marry her. She began to be more scrupulously attentive to her dress, visited her new friends more frequently, and so neglected her true and affectionate friend Julia, that she scarcely ever paid her a visit.

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CHAPTER VIII.

MADAM VON HUGEL.

MADAM VON HUGEL observed with sorrow, that Clara frequented that house. She trembled for Clara's innocence, honor, and happiness; she knew that the reputation of the two ladies (whose mother was dead) did not stand very high, and especially that their brother, with all his politeness and good-breeding, was really a profligate young man, and a very improper companion for a young person.

The sisters were aware of their brother's profligacy, but made no attempt to check it, so long as he overlooked, or even openly made matter of sport of their own levity. Old Mr. Von Winnig was a

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very good man in his own way, but he was completely blind to the faults of his children. He sat over his books the whole day, counting his gold, and went in the evening to enjoy his glass of wine and his game of cards, and read the newspapers with his friends, leaving matters at home to go on as they might. His house was, every evening, a meeting-place for large parties of gay young persons, who spent their time in dancing, singing, and all sorts of amusements.

Good Madam Von Hügel warned Clara of her danger, with great candor and affection. "My dearest Clara," she would say, "you can never be happy unless you remain as virtuous and innocent as you are beautiful. A fair form is indeed a gift from God, and we should thank Him for it. Still, it is not only a fleeting but also a very dangerous gift. Your beauty you

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consider your richest treasure—take care that it be not your most deadly ruin. Your dress, too, is very elegant. Dress ought to be attended to—it should be neat and clean; but to dress beyond our means and rank of life is not praiseworthy, but censurable, and lowers a young woman in the eyes of sensible men. She that listens to every flatterer will, in the end, be despised by all. A young woman who has no other recommendation but her beauty, gayety, and dress, may do very well for a dance, but no sensible man would think of leading her to the altar. To fear God, to live piously and industriously, to be modest and retired, makes a girl agreeable to God and man, and adorns her more than gold and pearls. God watches over and provides for her, and gives her innumerable blessings. Here, as in every thing else, it is true to say that 'Piety is

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ever profitable, and has a promise both for this world and the next.'

"But levity and love of vain amusements and pleasure, injure both body and soul, and plunge us in temporal and eternal ruin. You have two ways before you —one which, though rough in the beginning, leads to happiness; another, which appears strewn with flowers, but leads to perdition. Choose now which of the two you please; but, mark my words, you will in the end know the truth of what I say—your own experience will confirm it."

Julia was present, and the bright tears were trembling in her eyes. She seized Clara's hand, and exclaimed, "Oh! dearest friend, you have so many good qualities —prudence, affection, a good education, and a fair form—it were a pity that any evil should befall you. It would break my

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heart! Let us both hearken to the wise warnings of my mother."

Clara was very much moved, and promised never to forget their true and affectionate advice.

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CHAPTER IX.

AN INVITATION TO A BALL.

WHEN Clara came home she was very pensive, and as she sat at her work in the shop, she made a thousand good resolutions. As it was Saturday evening, she rose early from her business, and was preparing to close the shop, but just at that moment, young Mr. Von Winnig entered to purchase some gloves for his sisters. "On Monday, my fair friend," said he, "will be a grand festival. The new ball-room in the English park, about a mile distant from the town, is to be opened. My sisters are going there in the morning after breakfast, and request the favor of your company. We dine abroad—then

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come the dance and splendid fireworks in the evening. Of course I could not be absent on such a festive occasion, and you, too, must promise not to disappoint us on any account. You will be the brightest ornament—the very queen of the festival. Allow me to present you with this bouquet of fresh roses, which I have worn on my breast; let it be my pledge that I shall open the dance with you. The beautiful red rose is the emblem of pleasure, and certainly, my dearest friend, we shall enjoy real pleasure to-morrow."

Clara took the roses and promised to go. At supper she asked her aunt's permission to take a ride on Monday morning with the two Misses Winnig. Her aunt consented with pleasure. The good woman was an excellent judge of silks and millinery, but knew very little about men. As long as the two young ladies gave her

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their custom, she regarded the common reports about them and their brother as vile slanders. She felt not a little flattered also at the high honor conferred on her dear niece Clara. She had not the least doubt that Mr. Von Winnig would marry her beautiful niece. "What doubt can be of the matter?" said she to herself;—"did not Miss Winnig's waiting-maid, when she saw me yesterday buying some yards of riband, tell me in the greatest confidence—'Miss Clara, if she wishes, may soon be my mistress?'"

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CHAPTER X.

A STARTLING APPARITION.

THE Monday morning was fair and cloudless, and promised a beautiful day. Clara rose early and spent a full hour before the looking-glass, arranging her dark rich hair, fastening her gaudy necklace of large imitation pearls, and adjusting her new gold ear-rings. She put on her usual neat dress when she was going out, to make some purchases, but prepared a beautiful muslin gown, which she reserved for the future sports of the day. Julia met her on her way.

“Ah! dear, dear Clara,” said Julia, “is it really true that you have changed your mind so soon, and are going to the ball

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to-day? Oh! do not go, my dear friend! what a terrible calamity, if you should fall a victim to your levity! Your love of these vain amusements must withdraw you from nobler pleasures, which are a foretaste of the joys of heaven. The vile dances which have now made their way from the lowest alehouses into houses of respectability, rob many a young maid of the health of both body and soul. Trust not the *airy** assurances of this light young man; they are like those shining glass pearls set in your hair—not genuine, and very frail. Believe me, Mr. Von Winnig will never marry any young woman who has not, at least, as much property as himself; and even though your aunt should leave you her whole house and establishment, you would still be poor

* There is a pun in the original here which it is impossible to translate into English.

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in his eyes. His intentions are not honorable—he is amusing himself at your expense. Oh, then, dearest Clara, take warning in time! Go on in your present course, and you run the risk of losing your innocence and honor, and of plunging yourself for the remainder of your days into the utmost wretchedness."

Clara answered sharply,—“Edward is not so wicked as you think. He is, on the contrary, the best of men. I have pledged my word to go to the park with him, and I cannot retract. But we are spending the time in this conversation: I shall be too late.” With these words she left Julia, and hurried on her way.

While making her purchases, her thoughts were elsewhere, and she could not restrain her imagination. After she had made her purchases, she returned in a great hurry to her aunt’s, put

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on her fine new white gown, and her rose-colored bonnet, and had nothing to do now but to place in her breast the roses which she had received from Mr. Von Winnig. She had kept the roses in cold water, in a back room, to preserve them fresh. But when she hurried into the room, and was stretching out her hand to take the flowers, she suddenly stood stock



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still, like one struck by lightning, and withdrew her outstretched arm in evident terror! Instead of the red roses which she had left there, she found a bunch of white ones!

Now she had not seen a white rose since she last wept over her mother's grave. She knew not whether she was awake or dreaming, and so striking was the impression on her senses, that she felt as if she stood once more over her mother's grave. The last admonitions of that dying mother—the words of her departed father beside the grave—the good resolutions which she had then made—all rushed together on her memory at this moment.

"Oh, God!" she exclaimed, "I feel as if I heard the voice of my dear mother crying out to me from the grave—'Oh, Clara! preserve your innocence!' or the solemn words of my father, which he ut-

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tered over her grave, and repeated at our last parting—‘Oh, Clara! save your soul! My kind mother—my dear father! sadly have I neglected your counsels!’

She began to weep, and the big tears streamed over her now pallid cheeks.

At this moment, Julia, who had concealed herself unobserved in the next room, entered the apartment.

“Oh, Julia!” said Clara, still weeping and throwing her arms around her, “Oh, Julia! you are my good angel. It was you who left the white roses here to warn me. You knew well from the history I gave you, the impression which the white roses would make on me. They have spoken more forcibly than any language. Alas! I have been very vain, foolish, and light-minded. Can you ever forgive me? Oh, do forgive me! I will ever make it

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my constant study to repay your kind affection. Yes, you are a real friend—you always told me the truth—and even when I slighted you, and turned a deaf ear to your warnings, you have found means to make these flowers speak to my eyes, and frighten me into a sense of duty.'

Julia, in tears, warmly embraced her friend. "From this moment," said she, "you are my friend as before. Yes, we both pledge ourselves anew, to walk hand in hand the paths of virtue. May our hearts be ever pure and stainless as these white roses, and thus never forfeit the pleasures of which the red rose is the emblem!" She then took the two white roses, gave one to Clara, and placed the other on her own bosom. "Let these white roses remind us in future of this

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compact." said she—'a compact on which God himself looks down with pleasure."

Clara laid aside her festive attire, took the pearls out of her hair, put on her usual modest dress, and went with her friend to Julia's mother. The good lady was delighted with Julia's ingenuous friendship, and Clara's repentance; and embraced both with the most maternal tenderness. Clara reverenced Madam Von Hügel as her mother, obeyed her with filial submission, visited her every day, and often worked whole weeks together in her house. Clara and Julia were like sisters—they had but one heart and one soul.

Mrs. Burke was very well pleased with this intercourse, but still she never could approve of Clara's conduct, in entirely giving up the acquaintance of the Misses Von Winnig. But after some time their

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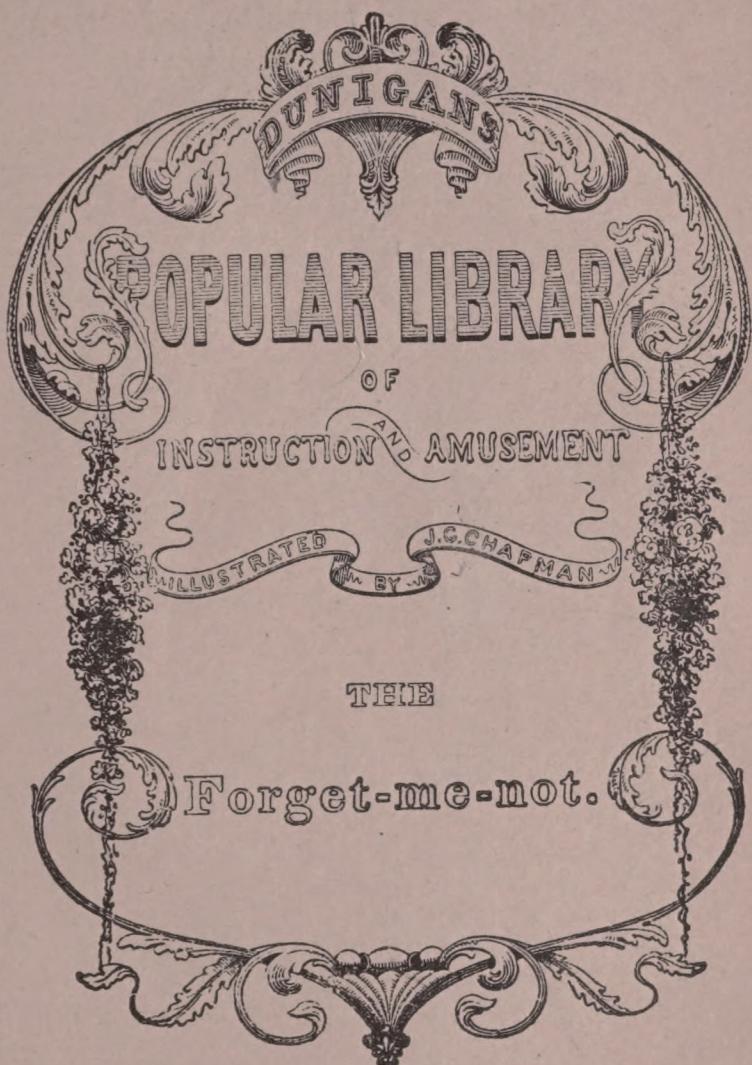
father's establishment stopped payment, and involved a great number of persons in very severe loss. The blame of this disaster was justly ascribed to the evil doings of the son, and to the lavish extravagance of the daughters. Mrs. Burke was highly irritated at losing a hundred florins by these people, but she was sincerely happy that her niece had so soon broken off all intercourse with them. "Madam Von Hügel," said she, "was right; she is really a very sensible woman. She has more prudence than myself."

Clara and Julia were universally esteemed for their amiable and virtuous conduct. Young men of the highest character anxiously sought the honor of their hands: and when Clara was led to the bridal altar, she wore a garland of RED

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AND WHITE ROSES; and in a short time after, Julia wore a bridal wreath of the same beautiful flowers.







"She forgot to water the beautiful flowers in
the hall of the castle, which were entrusted to
her care, and they withered and perished"—
Page 8.



FROM THE GERMAN OF
CHRISTOPHER VON SCHMID



ITTLE Minna was a kind, tender-hearted girl, who willingly shared all she had with others, gave clothes to

poor children, prepared broth and other food for the sick, carried it to them with her own hands, and, in a word, was never so happy as when she could relieve the wants of others, with the last

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penny of her own pocket-money. But with all her good qualities, incredible as it may appear, she often caused great annoyance to good people—for she was very forgetful. She made many promises—and forgot them all next day. She often gave a large price for a thing she did not want; and it was only when a poor person appealed to her charity, that she began to think what good use she could have made of her money. At another time, she forgot to water the beautiful flowers in the hall of the castle, which were intrusted to her care, and they withered and perished, to the great grief of her mother. At another time, poor Minna—she, who would give her own clothes to the poor, and would not hurt the smallest thing that breathes—would forget her own dear Canary bird, and starve it to death.

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In the village, not far from Minna's paternal castle, there lived Sophia, a poor little girl. Her father, Colonel Bruhl, a worthy old soldier, had been disabled by his wounds in foreign service, and was now living on his pension. He had returned to his native land, to spend the remainder of his days in peace. But his scanty income was scarcely sufficient for his support. His pension was not paid regularly, and many months had elapsed just then, without bringing any remittance to him.

Sophia, his only daughter, supported him, in the mean time, with her needle, and other useful accomplishments of her sex. She was a great favorite of Minna's, who gave her a great deal of work, took lessons from her in embroidery, paid her most liberally, and never addressed her with a less affectionate

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name than her dear friend. But even this dear friend often suffered severely from Minna's forgetfulness.



Minna's mother fell dangerously ill. The most eminent physician of the nearest town was called in; and Minna had promised that he should pay a visit to Sophia's father, who still, after the lapse of so many years, often suffered great

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torments from his wounds. Sophia had no sooner heard of the physician's visit to the castle, than she ran with all speed to remind Minna of her promise, but before she arrived, the physician was gone. Minna remembered her promise the moment Sophia appeared—she was confused—confounded—she blushed, begged Sophia's pardon, and expressed such hearty sympathy for the sufferings of the poor officer, that the tears streamed down her cheeks. But the physician—alas! to call him back, was impossible.

On another occasion, Minna proposed, with the help of Sophia, to embroider a screen for her mother's birth-day. Accordingly, Minna brought to her young friend a beautifully painted pattern, representing a garland of flowers. "We can easily work the garland," said Sophia; "but I must go to town myself

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and purchase the silk; for it requires an experienced eye to select proper silk, to represent, truthfully, the delicate shades and tints of the flowers."

"That's the best plan," answered Minna; "if you, my kind friend, be so good as to take the trouble. In the mean time, during your absence, I will take care of your father, and prepare his dinner, and bring it to him with my own hands."

Sophia relied on her young friend's promise, and started for town. But, unfortunately, it so happened that a distinguished visiter drove from town to visit the castle, and, amid the distractions and pleasure of this visit, Minna forgot her promise. The poor officer was confined to his room. He could not stir; and as all his neighbors were out in the meadows at the hay-making

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no person was within call. Bread and water were his only fare—while all the luxuries of life were plenteously circulating at the festive board of the castle.

Next morning Minna, accompanied by two young ladies, her visitors, went to walk in the village. Sophia was watering a piece of linen, the production of her industrious winter evenings—which she had laid out to bleach on the small green plot, between her house and the stream. Minna's heart smote her when she saw Sophia, for it was then only she remembered her promise. But Sophia was too delicate to upbraid her friend in presence of the strangers. Still she felt strongly inclined to convey some intimation, that, henceforward, she ought not to be so forgetful, at least, in such matters. Sophia invited the three young ladies to see her garden. They entered,

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and admired the beautiful rose-trees which she had planted with her own hand, and the forget-me-nots which grew wild on the brink of the stream. She then conducted them into her parlor, and, at the request of Minna, showed them all her work. While the young ladies were engaged admiring the beautiful patterns, and exquisite embroidery, Sophia returned to the garden and selected some flowers. To the two strangers she gave roses ; but to the forgetful Minna, a bunch of forget-me-nots—simply, but tastefully wreathed with some green leaves. Minna understood the meaning of this present. She was deeply sensible of the refined delicacy of her friend's device, and thanked her, with her whole soul, for having taken this means to admonish her of her forgetfulness. "Truly, you knew the flowers that become me

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best," said she, blushing, and placing the blue nosegay on her bosom.

Minna returned, with the two young ladies, to the castle, and accompanied them to the apartments that were prepared for them. They placed their flowers in a crystal vase near the window. After the lapse of a few weeks, Minna happened to enter that chamber; the young visitors had carried away their own flowers, but there stood Minna's "forget-me-nots," which, to this very moment, she had completely forgotten. The fragrant leaves, which she had wound around her nosegay, were withered, but the forget-me-nots, themselves, were of as fresh and vivid a blue as on the day they were gathered from the river's brink. Minna was not a little amazed. "How is this possible," said she; "there is not a drop of water in the glass, and all the

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other shrubs are as yellow and shrivelled as autumnal leaves." She examined the bunch more closely, and discovered that the forget-me-nots were not natural, but artificial. Sophia was a perfect mistress of that delightful art of imitating natural flowers—she had made these forget-me-nots with her own hand—and so correct was the outline, so true and natural the coloring, that it required no ordinary skill to distinguish them from real flowers.

" You are perfectly right, kind Sophia," thought Minna, " I understand you perfectly. Indeed, I stand too much in need of some such admonition. These unfading flowers are a perpetual warning to me 'not to forget:' never—never more, dear friend, will I forget thee. These very flowers shall I henceforth use, to remind me of my duty."

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Without further delay, she took the blooming forget-me-nots, with their withered wreath, and placed them in a beautiful crystal vase, elegantly ornamented. Then hastening away to her friend, Sophia, she cordially thanked her for her happy device, and praised the exquisite skill and taste she had shown in making the flowers. “Whenever I make a promise, henceforward,” said she, “I will set these flowers on my work-table or piano, and not allow them to be removed by any person but myself, when my promise is fulfilled.”

“Bravo, bravo,” exclaimed the old colonel, “do so. Whenever I wish to remember any thing particularly, I always place a piece of white paper on my box, and my sergeant used to make a mark in his pocket-book; but, for a young lady, flowers are the most ap-

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ropriate memento. I admire the happy suggestion, which led men to select the most beautiful flowers in the field, as a memento of sweet associations, and call them forget-me-nots; but I admire, still more, the idea of using them to remind us of our duties, especially the sacred duties of charity. Happy thought, indeed—it delights me—it is a most happy thought."

Minna kept her word, and the forget-me-nots secured many blessings to herself and to the poor. Many a poor person, whom Minna would have forgotten, had to thank those sweet flowers for a bowl of good soup, or a glass of wine, or a piece of bread. Many a duty, once carelessly neglected, was now punctually discharged—and many a sorrow and remorse of conscience, and painful remembrance, were now spared to Minna, by the silent forget-me-nots.

The great improvement in her habits was soon obvious to the fond eye of her mother. "How is it," she asked, "that you do not forget the slightest thing now? What has caused this great change?"

Minna told the whole story of the forget-me-nots, with which her mother was highly pleased. "You are good children," said she, "and I must find some means of making you happy." She accordingly purchased, from the goldsmith in the town, two rings of the purest gold, and had set on each of them a forget-me-not in precious stones—five sky-blue sapphires, and a yellow diamond stone in the centre.



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When the rings came home, she gave one of them to Minna. "Make the same use of this ring," said she, "as you have formerly made of the forget-me-nots. Whenever you make a promise, or are engaged in any important concern, put this forget-me-not ring on your finger, and do not lay it aside, until you have fulfilled that promise, or performed your business. This other ring, I intend for your good friend, Sophia, whose successful device for reforming your forgetful habits, eminently deserves some acknowledgment at my hands. That plain 'forget-me-not,' which she presented to you, is of infinitely greater value than the ring which I now present to her."

Minna hurried away to present the ring to her friend. "Oh!" said she, "you have no need of such a ring. You

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never forget any thing. Still, accept and wear this ring, as a keepsake from a friend, on whom your simple flower has conferred a priceless benefit."



"Ah! my dear friend," said Sophia, "who is the person that does not sometimes require to be reminded of his duty? Whenever we look on this costly forget-me-not, may we resolve to do some good

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act; to relieve some poor person; or to do whatever is in our power to make others happy." Both promised faithfully to carry that resolution into effect.

"Well resolved, my children," said the colonel, "and whoever cannot wear so costly a ring as yours, may he still make your good resolution, whenever he sees the forget-me-not growing wild in the meadow or on the river's brink. But above all, may that sweet flower remind him of Him that made him, and whom every flower should bring to our minds. Then would every forget-me-not that grows in our fields, be of more real value than if its stem were of gold, and its leaves of the most costly diamonds."

This adventure of the forget-me-nots was attended with other good effects. When stern winter set in, and all the fields around the castle were clothed

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every morning in their chilly mantle of hoar-frost, and the hoarse winds howled through the halls, Minna and her mother returned to their town residence. The story of the forget-me-not was circulated among Minna's numerous acquaintances, and forget-me-not rings became a fashion. Every person knew the circumstance that led to the adoption of the ring—and the prince himself now remembered that good old colonel, whom he had formerly trusted and esteemed. The paymaster, who had forgotten to pay the pension, soon received a royal admonition, which he could not easily forget; and the poor colonel, whose wants had been previously unknown, was rewarded with a considerable augmentation of pay. For this unexpected change of his fortunes, many a time did the grateful old soldier exclaim, "How great are the blessings

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which God has poured down on me
and others through that simple Forget-
me-not !'



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